AUGUST 27, 2018

TIME

'NOTHING ABOUT ME RIGHT NOW IS PERFECT. BUT I'M PERFECTLY SERENA'

INSIDE HER COMPLICATED COMEBACK

BY SEAN GREGORY

TIME
VOL. 192, NO. 8 | 2018

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Conversation

WHAT YOU SAID ABOUT ...

SPIKE LEE'S LONG GAME Our Aug. 20 cover profile of the *BlacKkKlansman* director struck a chord. Spelman College president Mary S. Campbell called Carrie Mae Weems' cover portrait "stunning." Jim Eisenshtadt of West Bloomfield, Mich., said Rembert Browne's profile was "beautifully written," and the Rev. Al Sharpton displayed it on MSNBC as proof of how long Lee has been "mainstreaming" discussion of hate. Meanwhile, Stu Luttich of Geneva, Neb., thinks it will take more than one person to change hearts and minds: "Difficult to understand how racial prejudice and racism can ever be put to rest when there is almost a common visceral drive to keep it alive."

'THIS was a fantastic read! Long live Spike Lee!!'

@NAP2030, on Twitter

FIGHTING FAKE NEWS AOL co-founder Steve Case tweeted Katy Steinmetz's feature on how the brain tricks people into believing fake news. "I loved the statement 'Political convictions lead us to lazy thinking,'" wrote Pam Taylor of Zeeland, Mich. "Thanks for helping your readers not be lazy thinkers." But Bridget Loven of Charlotte, N.C., who was a librarian for 22 years, said the article failed to acknowledge librarians' efforts to "educate their patrons." To avoid reading fake news, just pick up the latest issue of TIME, said Mike Lukasik of Kenmore, N.Y. "I've heard that they employ an army of professional journalists."

'If people listen to many views and think for themselves ... this is more unlikely to happen.'

@JACQUELINECS12, on Twitter

Back in TIME

Sister Act
Sept. 3, 2001

The profile of tennis star Serena Williams *(page 32)* shows how far she and her sister Venus have come since TIME's 2001 cover story on the siblings when they were 19 and 21, respectively. They made tennis "the first women's sport in the U.S. to become more popular than its male counterpart that doesn't involve doing pretty leaps on a mat or an ice rink," TIME wrote. Read it at **time.com/vault**

CAN APPS PREVENT PREGNANCY? After Natural Cycles became the first app to be FDA approved as contraception in the U.S., TIME spoke to women who have replaced birth control pills with fertility-tracking apps. Doctors remain skeptical about their effectiveness and explain what women need to know if they download the apps. Read the story at **time.com/fertility-apps**

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For the Record

‘I just gave the maximum allowed donation to Jennifer Lewis, a democrat running for my father’s congressional seat.’

BOBBY GOODLATTE,
via Twitter, son of retiring Republican Representative Bob Goodlatte, objecting to his father’s role in the firing of FBI agent Peter Strzok, which he described as “political grandstanding”

17

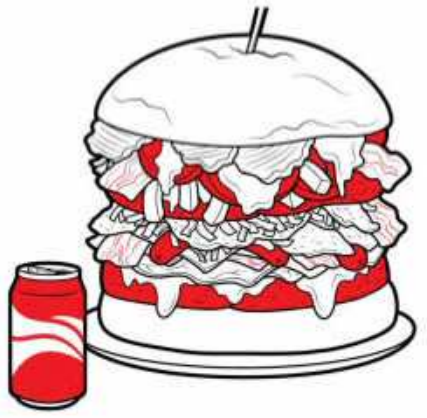
Number of days an endangered killer whale swam with her dead calf on her back—her way of grieving, according to the Center for Whale Research

‘The Saudi Arabian sovereign wealth fund has approached me multiple times about taking Tesla private.’

ELON MUSK,
Tesla CEO, clarifying in an Aug. 13 blog post what he meant by “funding secured” when he announced he’s “considering” taking Tesla private in a surprise Aug. 7 tweet

‘MEN CANNOT CONTROL THEMSELVES … SO ALL OF SOCIETY HAS TO ADAPT.’

GWENDOLINE COIPEAULT,
activist at Femmes Solidaires, one of many French people outraged at the sight of urinals installed around Paris to curb public urination



7 lb.

Weight of a $75 burger sold at the Arizona Cardinals’ stadium; toppings include five beef patties, five beef hot dogs, five bratwursts, 20 slices of American cheese, eight slices of bacon, eight chicken tenders and 12 oz. of french fries

‘I saw him put a note in his mouth.’

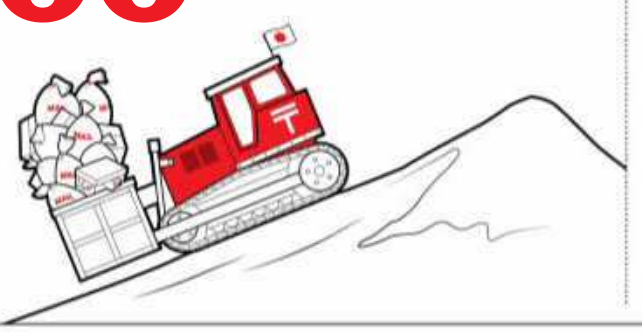
OMAROSA MANIGAULT NEWMAN,
former White House aide, claiming President Trump appeared to chew and swallow a piece of paper; both the White House and former Trump lawyer Michael Cohen denied it happened

‘You just need to knock them out and drag them to shore.’

MATT BEVIN,
Republican governor of Kentucky, likening state workers who oppose pension reform to drowning victims

97,000

Estimated pieces of mail sent from the post office at the summit of Mount Fuji during the summer of 2017



Inflatable unicorns
Five women stranded on a unicorn float had to be rescued after getting stuck in weeds on a Minnesota lake

Unicorn startups
A report predicts 2018 could be a record year for startups valued at more than $1 billion

ILLUSTRATIONS BY BROWN BIRD DESIGN FOR TIME

SOURCES: NEW YORK TIMES, AP, REUTERS, WASHINGTON POST, TESLA, CRUNCHBASE

The Brief

LAST STAND
Defeated Syrian rebels convoyed in April to Idlib, now under threat

INSIDE

CHINA RAMPS UP BRUTAL CAMPAIGN AGAINST A MUSLIM MINORITY GROUP

THE SECURITY RISK EXPOSED WHEN AN AIRLINE WORKER STOLE A JET

V.S. NAIPAUL'S FORMIDABLE BODY OF WORK AND TROUBLING LEGACY

PHOTOGRAPH BY MOHAMMED BADRA

WORLD

Syria's last rebel-held region awaits its fate

By Rebecca Collard/Beirut

ON AUG. 9, THE SYRIAN ARMY DROPPED LEAFLETS ON the province of Idlib telling residents that "the war is nearing its end" and urging them to cooperate with government forces. One showed grainy pre-war images of an old woman embracing a soldier; a young man studying; and a leafy, peaceful Damascus street: THIS IS HOW WE WERE BEFORE TERRORISM, it read. Then came photos of a destroyed neighborhood, a young boy carrying an unexploded shell, and women covered in niqabs and chained together. IT'S TIME TO STOP THE BLOODSHED AND DESTRUCTION, another flyer said.

For years, Syria's defeated rebels have fled to the northern territory of Idlib, which was established as a "de-escalation zone" guaranteed by Turkey, Russia and Iran. As the government retook areas like Aleppo and eastern Ghouta, surrendering fighters and their families were sent to Idlib under a deal negotiated by the regime's ally Russia. Now it is the last major opposition-held region in the country—and the last major obstacle to President Bashar Assad declaring victory. His regime is sending tanks north and has scaled up air attacks in preparation for what could be the final battle in this seven-year-long civil war.

But the siege-until-surrender strategy that allowed the government to retake control of other territories may be less feasible in Idlib. The province is home to more than 2 million people, including 70,000 fighters belonging to more than a dozen rebel factions. Although many of these groups are aligned against one another, few are likely to raise the white flag if Assad's forces stage a major operation. "The morale here is high—the rebels and fighters here in Idlib are ready for any attack by the regime," Amer Abu Anas, an opposition fighter in southern Idlib, tells TIME. Abu Anas says that in recent weeks, rebel groups have cracked down on dissent in Idlib, arresting those they think could side with the regime or seek reconciliation. "There should be no room for negotiations with the Syrian regime. This time we will fight to the last man."

YET DESPITE THEIR BRAVADO, it's unlikely these poorly armed, divided opposition groups can fend off the Syrian army and its allied militia backed by Iran and Russia. The U.N. and human-rights groups have warned of a humanitarian catastrophe if the Syrian government tries to retake Idlib by military force. Such a confrontation could push millions of refugees toward the Turkish border north of Idlib, raising the possibility of a broader conflagration. "Turkey provides significant support to many opposition groups," notes Yezid Sayigh, a senior fellow at the Carnegie Middle East Center, "and has its own military presence of 1,300 on the ground."

Turkey has fashioned itself the protector of parts of northern Syria, putting troops on the ground in Idlib as part of an agreement reached with Russia. Having taken in more than 3 million Syrians already, the last thing it wants is a military confrontation that would send a fresh wave of refugees its way. Nor does Russia, arguably the Syrian regime's most powerful friend, see the value in retaking Idlib. In late July, Russia's special envoy for Syria, Alexander Lavrentyev, said that "any large-scale operation in Idlib is out of the question." Russia would like to see all of Syria under Assad's control, but a full-scale military engagement would be costly, especially with Turkey involved.

Joost Hiltermann, director of the Middle East & North Africa program at the International Crisis Group, says he believes Turkey and Russia will stop the conflict from escalating. "In order for the regime to carry out a major assault on Idlib, you would have to have a major breakdown in relations between Russia and Turkey," he says. "And I don't see any breakdown at the moment. Turkey is in a bad state with the U.S. Turkey needs Russia. It needs other friends." Russia, he adds, will also want to keep Turkey onside.

But it's not clear if the interests of external powers will be enough to prevent bloodshed. Some of the more extreme rebel groups may not abide by Turkish orders. Even if Turkey can build an alliance of friendly rebels, that coalition might not follow Ankara's orders if provoked. At the same time, the Syrian government has little patience for the diplomatic approach, even in the face of Russia's misgivings. On the same day that Lavrentyev ruled out a major assault on Idlib, the regime's representative to the U.N., Bashar Jaafari, said that if talks fail, the government would indeed retake it by force. "When it comes to the recapture of all Syrian territories," Jaafari said, "there is no compromise."

For now, Idlib can only await its fate. Mustafa Hassan, a civilian who was displaced several times before settling in Idlib with his wife and five children, says military action has already increased in southern Idlib, but for now it's mostly calm in the historically more populous northern part of the province. Yet he fears there will be a prolonged and bloody battle if the regime does launch a full-scale assault. "There are thousands of opposition fighters who came from many other areas and were sent here by the government," Hassan says. "There is no other place for those fighters to go now. They will fight until they die this time." ◻

'Now Idlib is our target, although not only Idlib.'

SYRIAN PRESIDENT BASHAR ASSAD, to Russian media in July

PREVIOUS PAGE: EPA-EFE/SHUTTERSTOCK; THESE PAGES: ASSAD: SANA/HANDOUT/REUTERS; CHINA: NG HAN GUAN—AP/SHUTTERSTOCK

Security personnel patrol near the Id Kah Mosque in western China's Xinjiang region on Nov. 4

THE BULLETIN

China accused of detaining millions in crackdown on ethnic minority

CHINA'S REPRESSION OF A MOSTLY MUSLIM minority has left the western Xinjiang region resembling "a massive internment camp," a U.N. human-rights expert said at a summit on racial discrimination on Aug. 10. The U.N. panel cited "credible reports" that Chinese authorities have put more than 1 million Uighurs in internment camps and subjected 2 million more to "re-education" programs. China says it's merely cracking down on extremists.

MUSLIM OPPRESSION The Uighurs, a primarily Muslim ethnic group originating in central Asia, make up around 40% of Xinjiang's 19 million people. Since hard-liner Chen Quanguo took over the regional government in 2016, restrictions on religious activities and cultural expression have intensified. In 2017, Xinjiang barred veils in public and "abnormally long" beards. Locals must pass through regular police checkpoints. Human-rights groups say Muslims are often detained without charge and sent to indoctrination camps, and many are abused and tortured in custody. Democracy activists have urged the U.S. to confront China's leaders.

EXTREMIST EXCUSE China rejects the U.N. panel's allegations and says it is attempting to stamp out religious extremism and sectarianism in Xinjiang. The province has suffered episodes of violence since bloody clashes broke out in 2009 between Uighurs and the Han majority; 197 people, mostly Han, died. State media said on Aug. 12 that increased security measures have saved Xinjiang from becoming "China's Syria."

CHURCH AND STATE Since coming to power in 2012, President Xi Jinping has led a drive to subjugate both Islam and Christianity to Chinese identity. At places of worship across the country, authorities have swapped minarets and crosses for Chinese flags, reminding citizens to prioritize the atheist Communist Party above all else. The crackdown comes amid a dramatic expansion of China's surveillance apparatus, which is using tools like facial recognition and artificial intelligence to weed out dissidents and reward loyalty. With China firmly under the control of the party, difference—religious or otherwise—is increasingly not to be tolerated.

—CIARA NUGENT

NEWS TICKER

Venezuela scraps fuel subsidies

Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro announced sweeping cuts to domestic gasoline subsidies on Aug. 14, as his country's economic collapse continues. At current prices, **filling the tank of an SUV 9,000 times costs roughly as much as a cup of coffee.** Maduro said the move would stop fuel smuggling.

Google can still find out where you are

Many Google-owned services **store location data even when consumers use privacy settings that tell the apps not to do so,** the Associated Press reported on Aug. 13. Google typically asks permission to use location data, but users would need to turn off separate settings to prevent Google from storing their location.

Vehicle attack in London

Three people were injured in London on Aug. 14 when **a man crashed a car near the Houses of Parliament.** Salih Khater, 29, was arrested on suspicion of terrorism and attempted murder. Since March 2017, vehicles have been used in four attacks in London, killing 14 and injuring dozens more.

NEWS TICKER

Historic primary wins

Democrats delivered **groundbreaking primary victories on Aug. 14** for a transgender woman in Vermont, a Muslim woman in Minnesota and an African-American woman in Connecticut. The U.S. could be poised to elect its first openly transgender governor and to send its first Muslim women to Congress.

Police violence in Romania protests

Romania opened an investigation into alleged police violence at antigovernment protests in August. **Some 80,000 people filled the streets of Bucharest** and other cities for days, decrying corruption and low wages. Police allegedly used tear gas, batons and pepper spray to disperse crowds, injuring hundreds.

Bayer shares slide after Monsanto trial

Jurors in San Francisco ruled on Aug. 10 that **Roundup, a popular weed killer made by Monsanto,** gave a former school groundskeeper cancer. After the decision, the stock price for German chemical company Bayer, which recently bought Monsanto, dropped sharply.

GOOD QUESTION

Did the airline worker who stole a plane expose a security risk?

ON THE EVENING OF AUG. 10, A HORIZON AIR grounds crewman towed a 76-seat Dash-8 Q400 from a maintenance area at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport, jumped into the cockpit and took off. The 29-year-old, later identified as Richard Russell, flew around the Puget Sound area for about an hour, musing about the sunset over the Olympic Mountains, an orca whale recently spotted mourning her dead calf and whether he could coax the twin-engine turboprop into doing a barrel roll. It's not clear if he knew that a pair of F-15 fighters were following him for much of his flight, missiles loaded.

"I've got a lot of people that care about me, and it's going to disappoint them to hear that I did this," Russell told air-traffic controllers, according to recordings. "I would like to apologize to each and every one of them. Just a broken guy, got a few screws loose, I guess. Never really knew it until now." Shortly after, his plane crashed into the tiny, mostly uninhabited Ketron Island. Russell did not survive; authorities said he was "suicidal."

Tragic as Russell's flight may have been, it could have gone worse. He had no formal flight training and alluded to learning to fly from flight-simulator software. Such an inexperienced pilot could have caused a catastrophic incident on the runway or crashed into a more populated area. Thankfully, air-traffic controllers guided Russell away from dangerous routes, tried to get him to land the aircraft safely and cautioned other pilots out of his path.

The incident is raising questions about safety and security just as previous aviation disasters have. Nearly 17 years after 9/11, the idea of turning airplanes into suicide missiles still haunts us. What if Russell were someone else, someone intent on killing others? In any case, he was an authorized employee who passed background checks to get his job. But should he have been able to start, or even access, the airplane? Were there any signs of his condition beforehand? And what can airlines do to address workers' mental-health issues?

"Those of us in this industry have felt like there has been some exposure to what is being called the 'insider threat.' That's an issue that probably needs to be looked at and some mitigations put in place," says Alan Stolzer, dean of the College of Aviation at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

Indeed, learning from past mistakes is gospel in the aviation world. Just three years ago, another airline worker, Germanwings pilot Andreas Lubitz, deliberately crashed an Airbus A320 into the French Alps, killing himself and 149 others on board. Officials responded with mandated mental-health programs for pilots. During a news conference, Brad Tilden, CEO of Horizon parent Alaska Air Group, said the Seattle incident "is going to push us … to make sure this doesn't happen again." Better securing of aircraft and access to mental-health resources might be a good start.

—ALEX FITZPATRICK

EMPLOYMENT

Doing what you love

An ad for a cat caretaker on the Greek island of Syros went viral after people saw the job came with views of the Aegean Sea and 55 feline friends. Here, other dream jobs. *—Abigail Abrams*

ISLAND PARADISE
In 2009, British charity worker Ben Southall beat 34,000 other candidates to become caretaker of Australia's tropical Hamilton Island for six months. He ended up working long hours to promote the island.

DAY DREAM
Want to sleep on the job? Mattress Firm said in July it's hiring a "snoozetern" to test beds in its Houston offices and post about them on social media. The intern will also film videos and offer sleeping tips.

SWEET TOOTH
Ferrero, the Italian company that owns Nutella, announced plans to hire 60 amateur "sensory judges" to taste its products. Candidates will relocate to Italy in September and go through a paid training program.

GOD'S LITTLE PEOPLE CAT RESCUE/FACEBOOK

AMERICAN CRUISE LINES

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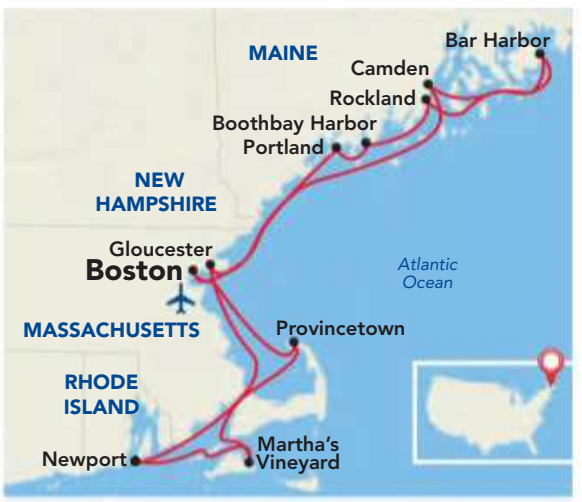

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FIRED
FBI agent **Peter Strzok,** who was removed from the Russia investigation after criticizing President Trump in text messages, by FBI Deputy Director David Bowdich, on Aug. 10.

REVOKED
The **security clearance of John Brennan,** former CIA director under President Barack Obama and frequent critic of President Donald Trump, by the White House, on Aug. 15. The move was criticized by experts as an unprecedented attack on a political opponent.

OBTAINED
U.S. citizenship, by First Lady Melania Trump's parents, after she sponsored them through the legal immigration program that her husband has denounced as "chain migration."

REJECTED
A bill to **legalize abortion,** by Argentina's Senate, on Aug. 9, after a 17-hour hearing. While the decision was a blow to grassroots activists, many saw the campaign as the start of a reproductive-rights movement across Latin America.

EXECUTED
Carey Dean Moore, a convicted murderer, with a **drug cocktail that included fentanyl,** by the Nebraska department of corrections, on Aug. 14. This marked the first time a state has used the opioid in a lethal injection.

Nobel laureate Naipaul reshaped postcolonial literature but drew admiration and outrage in equal measure

DIED

V.S. Naipaul
Brilliant reactionary

By Meena Kandasamy

IT WAS ONCE TAKEN FOR GRANTED THAT WRITING ABOUT THE far-flung world was a white man's task. But when V.S. Naipaul—who died at 85 on Aug. 11—stormed that bastion with his portrayal of life in the former colonies, he transformed the literary landscape.

Born in rural Trinidad, Naipaul was determined to escape, winning a scholarship to Oxford in 1950. He made England his home for the rest of his life. He published more than 30 books—novels, essays, memoirs and political travelogues through troubled regions—and picked up almost every major literary award, from the Booker Prize in 1971 to the Nobel Prize in 2001.

As the grandson of indentured Indian laborers in the Caribbean and as an immigrant student in Churchill's England, Naipaul suffered from a certain rootlessness. He ferociously churned out opinions that bordered on racism and Islamophobia, dismissed women writers as unequal to him and admitted to being "very violent" toward his mistress.

A brilliant, tormented artist, Naipaul was compulsively readable—even when one absolutely disagreed with his arguments. But as we marvel at his formidable body of work, we must also mourn the immense talent he squandered on hostility.

Kandasamy is an Indian poet and novelist

REVEALED

Pennsylvania church abuse
A catalog of sins

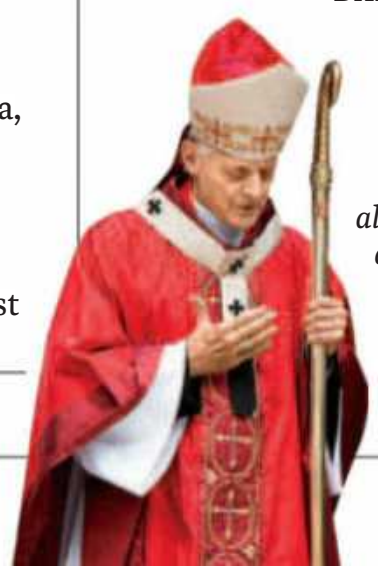
IT'S HARD TO COMPREHEND the numbers: 1,000 victimized children; 300 priests; seven decades of abuse, kept silent in a single state.

But the stark details in the Aug. 14 Pennsylvania grand jury report into sex abuse by Catholic Church leaders are nauseatingly easy to picture and hard to erase from your mind. The ring of clergymen who took nude photos of a boy posing as Christ on the Cross. The Allentown priest who forced a boy to give him oral sex, then washed his mouth out with holy water. The teenage boy raped so aggressively over several years that his back was injured.

In most cases, it's too late for action. Many of the accused are dead, and almost all their crimes fall beyond the state's statute of limitations. Cardinal Donald Wuerl, the former Pittsburgh bishop accused in the cover-up, faces questions that will threaten his position as Archbishop of Washington. (He denies the claims.) But others will never face justice.

That knowledge is hard to bear, but there is a measure of justice for the victims. As the members of the grand jury write of the abuse, "Now we know the truth: It happened everywhere."

—DAN STEWART



Cardinal Wuerl has denied allegations of a cover-up

NAIPAUL: EAMONN MCCABE—CAMERA PRESS/REDUX; WUERL: JOSHUA ROBERTS—REUTERS

THE BREAKDOWN

Wednesdays at 4:00 PM ET

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ABC World News Tonight anchor **David Muir** wants to earn your trust, one broadcast at a time

By Karl Vick

ON *ABC'S WORLD NEWS TONIGHT WITH DAVID MUIR*, the nation's best-liked anchorman could well be made of pixels, so effectively does the newscast approximate the digital vibrancy of a computer screen. But put the man on a New York City street at midday and his corporeal reality is affirmed by a steady stream of strangers, mostly women and mostly of a certain age.

"If I were younger …" says a grinning pedestrian approaching Muir at the corner of Central Park West and 66th Street, where he has arrived to have his photo taken for TIME.

"He's even more handsome in person," another calls out.

Muir shouts back, "Louder!"

Television does not lack for measures of popularity, and the summer of 2018 finds Muir perched atop a bunch of them. According to Nielsen, *World News* has often drawn more viewers than any other nightly newscast, winning last season and topping the ratings for 26 straight weeks this year. Q Scores, a company that measures "emotional connection" with consumers, places Muir ahead of other big names in the world of TV news and information.

That makes the 70th anniversary of ABC's nightly newscast a bit sweeter, and perhaps a bit more relevant. In an era when most news on television is something that's already known and just being chewed over, there's something reassuring in finding that the largest audience of the day chooses a program dedicated to simply presenting it. Muir embraces what, seven decades on, counts as a tradition.

"I was the kid who would excuse myself from the backyard and go in and watch Peter Jennings," he says of his childhood in Syracuse, N.Y. "I was drawn to him. And I don't think at 12 or 13 you can put into words why you're drawn to a particular journalist, but Peter's curiosity was infectious. He seemed to be the one who was having a conversation with America every night."

Muir gives it a beat. "I think now, in the age that we're in, it's more of a two-way conversation."

The anchor, 44, has been sitting in Jennings' old chair for nearly four years now. On a wall in his office, sunlit by the giant window that vibrates with the noise of a construction site across the street, is the American flag that flew over the U.S. Capitol the day of his first broadcast, Labor Day 2014. Next to it is a blowup of a photograph Muir took of a taxi door in Cairo during the Arab Spring. And beside that is a group photo from Somalia, where he came under fire while reporting on famine. Then there's a shot from Hurricane Katrina.

MUIR RAISED HIMSELF to the position of anchor by reading the news from a cardboard box in his living room, then from behind desks at local stations in Syracuse and Boston before ABC hired him in 2003. But he likes to be out in the world, "globetrotting" like Jennings. In his phone Muir keeps photos of a Syrian boy, Rami, whom he had reported on in Beirut. When Muir returned a few years later, he spent an entire afternoon tracking Rami down. If one of the pleasures of foreign reporting is going to new places, another is returning to a place you've been before.

"My biggest challenge is that people do actually expect you to be there at 6:30, Monday through Friday, at that desk," Muir says. "So in order to carve out some of the reporting that fuels me, that generally means squeezing in a weekend here or there where I can take off and pick up a story and get back in time for Monday's broadcast." These days, it's possible to take the show on the road with just three other people. But you can't do that lightly. Anchoring from the scene of a breaking story changes the perception of that story. And perception is something the wise news outlet gauges carefully and constantly.

"I think that in this era, where people are really hungry for someone that they can trust and a team they can trust, that it's just something they sense in their gut," Muir says. "And we go out there and try to earn that trust every single night. And we're not perfect. One of the great gifts of this job is that you can go out the next night and give it your best shot again. But we never forget that we're reporting to a divided country."

The challenge, he says, when "half the country is saying give the guy a break and the other half of the country is still saying how on earth could this happen and how much longer will it last," is to hear both sides without being identified with either. "We do this balancing act every night of trying to signal to an audience we hear you, we're asking questions for you."

The tricky part, especially with Donald Trump, is how often the questions are critical. Muir got the first TV interview with Trump in the White House and made news by challenging the new President's contention that a think-tank study found widespread voter fraud. "Take a look at the

MUIR QUICK FACTS

Cub reporter
After writing to the "Walter Cronkite of Syracuse" for career advice, Muir landed an internship at a local CBS affiliate at 13. His height was charted in a newsroom doorway each year he returned.

Pope swag
After talking with Pope Francis in Spanish in 2015, Muir received a rosary from the Pontiff.

Family biz
The anchor's late uncle Doug Muir was a photographer whose work touched on "how people interacted in urban landscapes."

KRISTA SCHLUETER FOR TIME

Pew reports," Trump said. "I called the author of the Pew report last night," Muir answered. "And he told me that they found no evidence of voter fraud."

"Really?" Trump said, visibly taken aback. "Then why did he write the report?"

BEFORE *MAINSTREAM MEDIA* became an epithet, nightly newscasts helped define the nation that gathered to watch them. Muir senses that they still can, judging by the reaction to segments of his show like "America Strong."

"It basically just puts a spotlight on ordinary people doing extraordinary things," he says. "And I can't tell you how often I hear from people who say that moment is for them right now the most important part of the newscast. And I think what it means is that they're hearing us at the end of the news essentially say, You know, we're all in this together, and we'll tackle it again tomorrow. And there's actually quite a bit that unites us still in this country."

Muir still reads newspapers. On a Tuesday in early August, the New York *Times* is spread out on his glass-topped desk and others are stacked on the carpet below. He starts his day with a call from the show's executive producer. Then he hits the gym before riding the subway from his West Village home to ABC Studios on the Upper West Side, located on a block dubbed Peter Jennings Way. When Muir landed his first job at ABC, he was photographed leaning against a bus stop with an ad featuring Jennings. Now it's his own picture in the lobby. "It's a weird thing to walk by it," he says.

'We never forget that we're reporting to a divided country.'

DAVID MUIR, on the importance of fairness and perception

Since Trump entered politics, the news has been especially difficult to predict. The top story is apt to change minutes before broadcast, which may account for Muir's coiled-spring position at his desk. And the day that officially starts at about 10:30 a.m. doesn't end with the broadcast. There's an in-house critique and a rough plan laid out for the next day. Sometimes even that's not the end.

"I often clean out my inbox on the way home," Muir says, "and one night I looked up, and there's a gentleman who says, 'Are you?' And I said, 'Well, yeah,' and he said, 'Well, what happened today?' So I found myself doing the newscast all over again on the subway." □

Tragedy in Genoa

A 260-ft.-long stretch of the Morandi Bridge collapsed during a heavy storm in Genoa, Italy, on Aug. 14, sending dozens of vehicles plunging more than 100 ft. to the ground. Rescuers worked through the night to search for survivors as the death toll rose to at least 39. Italy's populist government suggested E.U. budget constraints were partly responsible for the collapse of the bridge, which was built in the 1960s and was due for an upgrade. But local media said lawmakers now part of the ruling coalition had dismissed earlier warnings over the structure and opposed plans to replace it. A criminal inquiry into the collapse has been announced.

Photograph by Stefano Rellandini—Reuters

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The View

ENVIRONMENT

PAYING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

By Justin Worland

As California has grown drier and hotter over the past few decades, its wildfire season has expanded from a trying few months to a yearlong struggle—causing greater and greater damage. The situation sharpens a critical legal question being asked around the globe: Who should be responsible for the costs of climate change?

INSIDE

WHAT AMERICA'S PARTY-LINE POLITICS CAN'T DO

HOW TURKEY'S ECONOMY IS BECOMING EVEN RISKIER

WHAT THE NEW OSCARS CATEGORY REVEALS ABOUT HOLLYWOOD

California is an exemplarily complex case. In June, the state's department of forestry and fire protection determined that 12 devastating fires that struck Northern California late last year were the result of trees coming into contact with power lines or other problems tied to the electric utility Pacific Gas & Electric. Thanks to a policy known as inverse condemnation, the utility could be on the hook for those damages, which the company says could easily surpass $10 billion, even if it is not found to be negligent.

In the past, PG&E has paid the bills when it was blamed for fires and other damages. But the company now says it cannot keep footing the bill so long as climate change continues to increase the likelihood of fires. Millions of trees have died across California after years of intense drought, creating vast quantities of fuel that allow fires to burn faster and over greater distances—all combined with higher temperatures. The problem only gets worse with time.

PG&E has pushed to raise electricity rates to pay for the damage. That would allow the companies to continue normal operations without bankruptcy, a fate local utilities fear.

Meanwhile, state officials are pushing a change in the law. Late last month, Governor Jerry Brown proposed a new plan that would allow a court to decide whether the utility acted "reasonably" before forcing the company to pay claims. "Costly wildfires and natural disasters have the potential to undermine the system," Brown told legislators, "leaving our energy sector in a state of weakness at a time when it should be making even greater investments in safety."

14
Number of the 20 largest wildfires recorded in California that have occurred since 2000

1.2 million
Number of acres burned in California wildfires last year

SOURCE: STATE OF CALIFORNIA

THE DEBATE over liability for climate change is decades old. As early as 1991, a group of small developing countries facing devastation as a result of sea-level rise and flooding called on rich countries to pay for "loss and damage." In climate-change negotiations, developing countries have argued that those that have emitted the most greenhouse gases—namely, the U.S. and other developed countries—should pay the cost of damages. Discussions on that are ongoing, and a significant rift remains even among governments committed to addressing global warming.

Within the U.S., that debate has taken several forms. On the federal level, proactive policymakers have pushed to rework the National Flood Insurance Program, which pays people to rebuild their homes after floods—even in areas where damage is likely to strike again. In effect, that program, which is more than $20 billion in debt, puts the burden of climate-change-related natural disasters in the hands of the U.S. government and the taxpayer. Infrastructure experts have also pushed the government, without much positive reception, to rethink its postdisaster funding to require climate-change preparedness measures.

A group of pioneering American cities and states have sought to have the oil-and-gas industry pay for climate-change-related damages and disaster-prevention measures. A series of lawsuits across the country have blamed the companies for years of polluting the planet while concealing evidence that emissions would contribute to devastating climate change. The authorities behind the lawsuits, ranging from San Francisco to New York State, hope that courts will force the industry to pay up.

Thus far, U.S. courts have expressed skepticism—not necessarily of the fault of oil and gas but of the ability of the judicial system to address the issue. "The problem deserves a solution on a more vast scale than can be supplied by a district judge or jury in a public nuisance case," wrote William Alsup of the U.S. District Court in Northern California as he dismissed a suit from the cities of San Francisco and Oakland in June.

Elsewhere, a slew of litigants have also looked to the courts, from a farmer in Pakistan arguing that his government failed to protect him to another in Peru suing a German power company for its greenhouse-gas emissions—which responded by pointing out that "everybody and everything over the world is a CO_2 or greenhouse-gas emitter." That, of course, is the problem. And lacking other avenues for addressing the issue, people feeling the brunt of climate change are increasingly turning to courts to help find a global answer to a global problem. ◻

SHORT READS

Highlights from stories on **time.com/ideas**

Party unity's diminishing returns

"The country suffers when major bills are passed along party lines," writes former U.S. Senator Joe Lieberman, who argues that the practice leaves the country with imperfect legislation that neither party has an interest in fixing as weaknesses emerge over time.

Documenting a massacre

Five years ago, photojournalist Mosa'ab Elshamy witnessed the Egyptian military killing hundreds of protesters in Cairo. The horrors continue to haunt him. Still, **journalists helped provide a narrative that combatted the state's.** He writes, "That is no small thing in today's world."

Let tech address inequality

Northwestern University law professor John O. McGinnis **criticizes progressives for calling inequality the defining issue of today but then regulating against the equalizing effects of tech companies,** which offer people cheaper business opportunities and services.

THE RISK REPORT

Turkey's Erdogan is in a no-win situation with Washington

By Ian Bremmer

RECEP TAYYIP Erdogan is having a very bad August. Turkey's President finds himself locked in a confrontation with a belligerent Donald Trump, and the U.S. President has again shown himself willing to use economic weapons that can inflict real pain. In response to a diplomatic standoff over a U.S. citizen detained in Turkey, the U.S. Treasury Department sanctioned Turkey's Justice and Interior ministers. Trump then announced plans to impose 20% tariffs on Turkey's aluminum and 50% on its steel. In response, the lira lost nearly one-third of its value in three days. Turkish equity markets fell 17% on fears that Turkish companies won't be able to pay debt denominated in euros or dollars.

Turkey's economy is in deep trouble, but the broader problem has less to do with Trump's sanctions and tariffs than with Erdogan's economic mismanagement. He has repeatedly intervened to prevent Turkey's central bank from raising interest rates, because he fears a reduction in the money supply will slow growth and damage his popularity. Rate hikes are needed, because inflation climbed to nearly 16% in July, three times the central bank target. The value of the lira was already at historic lows against the dollar even before sanctions. And Erdogan's decision to name his son-in-law as Finance Minister hasn't exactly cheered investors.

These missteps left Turkey's economy vulnerable. All Trump had to do was provide a shock to set the dominoes tumbling.

WHY IS ALL THIS HAPPENING? Trump has demanded that Turkey release Andrew Brunson, a U.S. evangelical pastor who has been held in Turkey for the past two years. Turkish prosecutors say Brunson has ties to the Kurdistan Workers' Party, which the Turkish government considers a terrorist group, and that Brunson aided the planners of the failed coup against Erdogan in 2016. The U.S. government says Brunson is innocent and wants him to come home.

Trump reportedly believed Erdogan agreed in July to a prisoner swap: he would ask Israel to release a Turkish national accused of spying, in exchange for Brunson. Israel released the Turkish prisoner, but Erdogan, who denies that was the deal, ordered only that Brunson be moved from prison to house arrest. An infuriated Trump responded by unleashing the sanctions and tariffs.

Erdogan's missteps left Turkey's economy vulnerable. All Trump had to do was provide a shock to set the dominoes tumbling

Whatever the deal was or wasn't, Turkey's economy is suffering for it. So far, Erdogan has responded with angry threats and trademark conspiracy theories. He has ordered that assets of the U.S. Justice and Interior ministers be frozen, though it's unclear how much U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke might have invested in Turkey. He has put his own tariffs on U.S. imports of cars, tobacco and alcoholic drinks.

For Erdogan's next move, it's instructive to look back at his confrontation with Russia's Vladimir Putin just over two years ago. After Turkey shot down a Russian warplane it said had strayed into Turkish airspace, Erdogan staged a show of defiance against Putin's threats. But when Russia imposed sanctions on Turkey's tourism, construction and food sectors, Erdogan quickly backed down. He'll eventually have to do the same with Trump, who, like Putin, has all the leverage. Someday, Erdogan will learn to avoid unwinnable fights.

If Turkey's economy is to recover, Erdogan must do more than solve the Trump problem. Conspiracy theories and threats may help win elections, but they don't convince investors that your economy stands on solid ground. ◻

CULTURE

Oscars for dummies

On Aug. 8 a new Oscars category, for "outstanding achievement in popular film," was announced. No one yet knows exactly what that means, but if nothing else, it tells us one thing: the Academy thinks the public is stupid.

For the past several years, the big Oscar winners have been smaller, independently financed pictures—not big-budget and -studio films. And Hollywood now seems ashamed that it long ago stopped giving us smart spectacles like *Lawrence of Arabia* or even dull but polished pictures like *A Beautiful Mind*.

It's disheartening, then, that the Academy should suddenly find the need to carve out a separate category for movies that maybe aren't good in what it perceives as an artistic way but that lots of people simply like. Especially because, by focusing only on what it knows an audience will buy, Hollywood may have shaped moviegoers' tastes for the worse—all while training them to crave an award that affirms their preferences. The Academy's latest popularity contest seems to be a final admission that it has given up on believing that entertaining us can be an art. —*Stephanie Zacharek*

OSCAR: SCOTT OLSON—GETTY IMAGES

Nation

IT'S TRUMP'S PARTY

IN THE CONTEST TO REPRESENT ARIZONA IN THE U.S. SENATE, THE PRESIDENT HAS ALREADY WON

BY PHILIP ELLIOTT/BLACK CANYON CITY, ARIZ.

JACLYNN GREER'S SERVICE STATION NORTH OF Phoenix is booming. And the local economy is so strong that she was able to launch a second small business. She credits it all to President Donald Trump. That's why Greer has shed her political identity as an independent and shown up on this scorching August evening at a Republican Women of Black Canyon City event, where GOP Senate hopeful Kelli Ward is milling about with 70 or so activists in a Masonic temple. "He's doing everything he said he'd do," Greer says of the President. "We need more people like Kelli to have Trump's back."

In terms of approval ratings, Trump's national numbers trail each of his four most recent predecessors at this point in their terms. But he remains overwhelmingly popular among GOP voters, ranging between 80% and 90%, according to Gallup. Which means that if you're a Republican running in a conservative state, the President's political clout can mean everything. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Arizona's Senate Republican primary, where former state senator Ward, Representative Martha McSally and retired sheriff Joe Arpaio are competing to cast themselves as Trump's preferred candidate on the Aug. 28 ballot.

This was not what national Republicans had in mind when they recruited McSally to run. They saw the two-term Congresswoman—a retired Air Force colonel who was the first female pilot in U.S. history to

Once a critic, McSally has embraced Trump in pursuit of his base

PHOTOGRAPH BY NICK OZA

Martha
McSALLY
U.S. SENATE
MARTHA

fly a combat mission—as the kind of pragmatic legislator who could attract Democratic votes in a state trending purple. She was widely expected to coast past Ward, who is seen as a hard-right candidate and who lost in a 2016 Senate bid, and Arpaio, who was convicted of criminal contempt in '17 when a federal judge found that he had ignored a court order to end racial profiling at his jail. (Arpaio, an outspoken Trump supporter, was pardoned by the President one month later.)

It wasn't just McSally's strong résumé that led establishment Republicans like Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell to regard her as the party's top recruit in the midterms. It was also her previous criticism of Trump. McSally skipped the 2016 GOP convention and called Trump "unacceptable" and "disgusting" after a video tape emerged of him bragging about sexual assault. She went on to win her district by 14 points the same day Hillary Clinton carried it by 5. In a sense, McSally embodied the fading Republican hope that Trump would not consume the party, and that lawmakers could speak out against the President without paying a price at the polls.

Instead, she may become a cautionary tale. McSally's lead has softened as right-wing voters have appeared to flee from Arpaio and consolidate around Ward. Seeing her advantage slide, McSally has both lowered her campaign profile and doubled-down on her awkward embrace of Trump. Worried national Republicans are dumping millions of dollars into the state to save McSally's struggling campaign, knowing her defeat would damage their chances of holding the seat—and the Senate—in November, when moderation can be a good thing.

What the race has already proved is that it may be impossible to stand up to Trump in any meaningful way and remain in good standing with the GOP. "He has a lot of diehard fans," says Bob Branch, a candidate for state superintendent who is wearing a button that reads, TRUMP SUPPORTERS ELECT DR. BOB BRANCH. "You can try to run without supporting him, but you're not going to do well."

IT WAS NEVER going to be easy for McSally to run against two more-conservative opponents. Already this year, Republicans have watched Representative Luke Messer, chairman of the Republican Policy Committee, lose an Indiana Senate primary to businessman Mike Braun, a Trump-styled outsider. In Minnesota, former two-term governor Tim Pawlenty came up short on Aug. 14 in his bid to return to the role, losing to a less well-known candidate who embraced the President. "The Republican Party has shifted," Pawlenty said upon losing. "It is the era of Trump, and I'm just not a Trump-like politician."

Arizona is a complicated place to run as a moderate Republican. The state GOP is among the most conservative ones in the country, going so far as to censure John McCain in 2014 for working on a bipartisan immigration bill. McCain had beat back a primary challenge from a Congressman turned talk-radio host in 2010 by lurching rightward, then survived six years later—when Ward challenged him and won 39% of the primary vote—by spending $6 million to stave her off. Almost immediately after that race, Ward gunned for Jeff Flake, one of the few Republicans in the Senate to regularly criticize the President. Sure enough, Flake suffered for his temerity. He looked at his poll numbers and deduced that the only way to win was to bear-hug Trump. He decided to retire instead.

So McSally chose to reinvent herself as a Trump acolyte. She withdrew her sponsorship of legislation to protect children brought to the U.S. illegally from deportation and removed video clips from her YouTube account defending these so-called Dreamers. Her announcement video included an edited clip of Trump praising her from the Rose Garden. She hit the trail with former governor Jan Brewer, a prominent Trump backer. McSally's supporters flooded social media with photographs of her in the Cabinet Room, two seats away from Trump as he talked about immigration. Her surrogates bragged about McSally's invitations to movie nights at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.

ARIZONA IS A COMPLICATED PLACE TO RUN AS A MODERATE REPUBLICAN

In some ways, the makeover is working. At least seven times, Trump has name-checked McSally at official events. The latest came on Aug. 13, when Trump saluted her as he signed a military spending bill at Fort Drum in upstate New York. "I've gotten to know her very well, and she is terrific," the President said, noting her combat flight experience.

But in other ways, McSally gives the appearance of a candidate trying to run out the clock. She has refused debate invitations, including one from Fox News, and isn't above kicking reporters out of an event. During the four days I was on the ground in Arizona, not once would her staff disclose where she was making public appearances, despite repeated requests. When told when I was leaving, the campaign finally offered me a chance to attend an event a few hours after that.

Meanwhile, Ward underwent her own reboot. In 2016, she openly questioned whether McCain would live to serve all of a new six-year term. The rough edges that made national Republicans skittish have been sanded down. "She's cleaned up her act," says Francine Romesburg, who leads the Grassroots Tea Party Activists of Arizona and considers Ward a friend.

Ward says she is even open to supporting McConnell staying on as majority leader if election night in November goes well for both of them. "I've heard people say, 'You're a different candidate than you were two years ago.' Well, if I weren't, then I shouldn't be here running for this office," Ward tells TIME at her campaign headquarters in a Tempe office park, where a cardboard cutout of Trump welcomes visitors at the front door and another leans against a wall in the conference room. The Ward campaign is in overdrive, with 27,000 doors knocked on and 240,000 calls to voters so far. (The McSally team says it is at the 500,000-call mark.) A super PAC backed by wealthy donors Robert and Rebekah Mercer dug deep in its pockets for ads to rebrand Ward and ding McSally. While she's deeply conservative, Ward is not the caricature that McCain and allies previously painted, when they incorrectly said she had used tax dollars as a state senator to investigate whether the government is adding mind-control chemicals to the air via Chemtrails, or the condensation trails

Ward chats up voters at the Palo Verde Republican Women's luncheon in Scottsdale on July 18

that follow planes. "I don't want to be a political bomb thrower," she says now.

The few public polls that exist have shown McSally running comfortably ahead, but observers on both sides say the race is narrowing. The National Republican Senatorial Committee is trying to coax Trump into endorsing McSally, Republican officials say. The logic is that a right-winger will have a harder time winning over independents in the general election. And if Arizona goes blue, there's a good chance that McConnell will have to yield the gavel to Democratic Senator Chuck Schumer. But Trump has resisted. Some Arizona Republicans suspect he is holding out hope for Arpaio, an early backer.

The cantankerous retired sheriff had been Ward's biggest challenge and McSally's best hope. Arpaio still has mythic standing among immigration hard-liners, and for months he and Ward had split their vote. But on Aug. 5, comedian Sacha Baron Cohen aired an interview with Arpaio in which he had duped the sheriff into saying he would engage in sexual acts with Trump if asked. The incident did little to help a campaign that spent little time pursuing votes. But as Arpaio faded, McSally suffered too. She had been faring fine in a three-way race, but a head-to-head with Ward looks trickier. Meanwhile, crafty Democrats are paying for ads attacking McSally and implicitly promoting Ward, since they see her as an easier opponent in November.

NO MATTER WHO emerges as Arizona's next Senator, the winner in all this may be Trump. The primary suggests that it's all but impossible to survive as a Republican without embracing him. Even the presumptive Democratic nominee, three-term Representative Kyrsten Sinema, is taking pains not to alienate Trump. Sinema, the first openly bisexual member of Congress, is a former Ralph Nader staffer who has proved to be a skilled fundraiser. But she recognizes the balancing act required to win in Arizona, and she has voted with Trump about 60% of the time, including to roll back some banking regulations and to allow veterans to seek treatment outside the VA. That has sparked some grumbling among her base: in May, the Pima County Democratic Party considered a motion of condemnation against Sinema, only to be talked out of it because it could help the Republican nominee.

These days Ward is betting she has the inside track. On a recent night at a Denny's in Phoenix, she stood for hours talking with activists as the thermostat on the wall clocked 94°F. A demand that Trump's proposed wall run full-length earned huge applause. Ward called herself "an America-first champion that will go to Washington, D.C., and get to work, working on an America-first agenda to make America great again and keep America great in 2018, 2020 and beyond." She kept talking, fully aware, along with everyone else in the Republican Party, that in a primary, no candidate dares to rise to challenge those words. ◻

PREVIOUS PAGES: THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC/SIPA USA; ROB SCHUMACHER—THE ARIZONA REPUBLIC/SIPA USA

World

THE DIAMOND AS BIG AS A VILLAGE

THE STORY OF HOW A 709-CARAT ROCK HAS TRANSFORMED LIVES FAR BEYOND SIERRA LEONE

BY ARYN BAKER/KORYARDU

PHOTOGRAPH BY JANE HAHN FOR TIME

Miners extract gravel at a diamond mine in Koryardu, Sierra Leone, where a 709-carat diamond was found in 2017

In the blazing midday sun, the yellow egg-shaped rock stood out from a pile of recently unearthed gravel. Out of curiosity, 16-year-old miner Komba Johnbull picked it up and fingered its flat, pyramidal planes.

Johnbull had never seen a diamond before, but he knew enough to understand that even a big find would be no larger than his thumbnail. Still, the rock was unusual enough to merit a second opinion. Sheepishly, he brought it over to one of the more experienced miners working the muddy gash deep in the Sierra Leonean jungle. The pit boss's eyes widened when he saw the stone. "Put it in your pocket," he whispered. "Keep digging." The older miner warned that it could be dangerous if anyone thought they had found something big. So Johnbull kept shoveling gravel until nightfall, pausing occasionally to grip the heavy stone in his fist. Could it be?

Johnbull, a gangly adolescent, could not help but fantasize about what finding a diamond of that size would mean. "In my mind, I was thinking, I will never be poor again," he says. He thought of how he had left school at 12, after the death of his father, a farmer. He thought of his illiterate mother, who died when he was 15. And then he swore to himself that if the stone did turn out to be a diamond, he would find a way to go back to school. "Finding a big diamond is a onetime blessing," he says. "Learning books can fix your life forever."

For most Sierra Leoneans, diamonds have been more of a curse than a blessing. An estimated 9 million carats of high-quality diamonds have been extracted from the small West African nation since rich alluvial deposits were first found by British colonialists in the 1930s, but the country has little to show for it. The diamond trade fueled a decade-long civil war here that ended in 2002, taking some 50,000 lives. The precious stones paid for the rebels' weapons, inspiring the 2006 Leonardo DiCaprio blockbuster *Blood Diamond*, which indelibly linked sparkling engagement rings with their high human cost for a generation of consumers. Barely any of the wealth has filtered back to Sierra Leone itself, still one of the world's poorest and least developed countries.

The "Peace Diamond," sold by the government of Sierra Leone for $6.5 million, on display at the Rapaport Group in New York in December 2017

But what Johnbull found on March 13, 2017, may have upended that narrative. Weighing 709 carats, it was the third largest diamond ever unearthed in Sierra Leone, and the 15th largest in the world. "We thought we would become the richest persons in the world," recalls Johnbull, speaking to TIME a year after the diamond was discovered. "People were telling me that it would sell for $50, $70 million."

His mining sponsor, a local pastor who paid for the five-man team's tools, food and medical care in exchange for a majority stake in whatever they found, took the diamond straight to a government representative, bypassing the usual smuggling route that is the way many major diamonds leave the country. In handing the diamond over to the government, which by law had the right to 60% of the proceeds from its sale, Pastor Emmanuel Momoh knew he would be losing the lion's share of the diamond's value. But he has no regrets, he says, adding, "I did the right thing. I can be proud of that."

In return, the government put the diamond up for public auction and promised that a portion of the proceeds—exactly 15%—would help provide new roads, schools, electricity and clean water systems around Koryardu, the village in Kono district where Johnbull found the stone. This is the first known case of a significant percentage of a diamond's true market value going to the people who found it and not dealers or middlemen—something that has so far eluded even big diamond companies such as Brilliant Earth, De Beers and Tiffany.

If the government delivers, it could be the start of a new era for miners who dig diamonds by hand, according to Martin Rapaport, founder of diamond-trade network the Rapaport Group. "When diggers see other diggers getting infrastructure, they will also sell their diamonds through legitimate channels," he says. "More taxes bring more infrastructure brings more legitimate diamonds sales that bring more tax revenue."

It's the first step for reversing Sierra Leone's diamond curse, he says, an economic benefit not just for the people who dig, but also for the nation as a whole. If the cycle is sustained, it could encourage consumer demand for fair-trade gemstones and precious metals, improving the lives of 1.5 million artisanal diamond miners worldwide. It would also go a long way toward combatting diamonds' stigma.

An additional C needs to be added to the usual four—carat, color, clarity and cut—that indicate a diamond's value, says Rapaport: context. "A diamond that makes the world a better place should be worth more money. Can we get to the point where consumers say, 'Hey, that diamond helped those

DIAMOND: TIMOTHY A. CLARY—AFP/GETTY IMAGES; CAR: TOMMY TRENCHARD—PANOS FOR TIME

Komba Johnbull, who found the diamond, decided to leave the country to pursue an education abroad

people—that's the diamond I want to give my wife'? If so, it is worth millions to the communities who produce them."

WHEN THE DIAMOND was first brought to the capital, Freetown, and presented to then President Ernest Bai Koroma in a massive media blitz, speculation over the stone's value was feverish. "We were a bit naive," admits Momoh, 44, who, as the diggers' sponsor, was the legal owner of the diamond. Based on carat weight alone, he thought the diamond would fetch about $50 million. "We didn't know about the other C's," he says. Much of the diamond is cloudy and flawed. Rapaport estimates that only 250 or so carats can be carved out for a big gem, along with a few smaller ones.

On Dec. 4, 2017, the diamond sold to British jeweler Laurence Graff for $6,536,360 in an auction managed pro bono by Rapaport. It was far less than even government evaluators expected, but it garnered something much more valuable: transparency. With the sale, citizens of Sierra Leone knew for the first time exactly how much a large diamond sold for, how much money went to the government, how much to the men who found it and how much—$980,454—the government had pledged to invest in the community where it was discovered.

In a country where corruption and governance are all but synonymous—Sierra Leone ranks 130 out of 180 countries on Transparency International's corruption perceptions index—it offers a rare opportunity for citizen oversight and accountability. "If the government does what it promised to do, it will improve people's confidence," says Abu Brima, executive director of the Network Movement for Justice and Development, a civil-society organization that works with Sierra Leone's mining sector. "If it doesn't, and this is a fact, the people will say, 'Pastor Momoh, he was a fool. He wasted his money by giving his diamond to the government.'"

When TIME visited Koryardu in March, a year after the diamond was found, residents were already beginning to suspect that they had indeed been taken for fools. The village, a small scattering of concrete huts with palm-leaf roofs, lies at the end of a severely rutted road that is all but impassable during the rainy season. The village well, installed by an NGO a decade ago, had dried up, and women and children trekked almost a mile to fetch water from a stream for their daily needs. Residents gathered

under the shade of a large tree to air their frustrations over the slow pace of development. Momoh, who has moved to Freetown but was back to visit, grimaced under the onslaught. "The surrounding villages are mocking us," lamented an elderly resident. "They say we will benefit nothing from this diamond." The village midwife, who serves as the de facto doctor despite having no training, made it clear to Momoh she held him accountable: "We are all looking to you, our brother, our pastor. If everything goes well, we will thank you for your good work. But if it goes wrong, you will get the blame."

Rattled, the pastor climbed back into his 4x4 and took off down the road, all too aware of the fact that his credibility as a man, a miner and a pastor was precariously balanced on the integrity of an institution riddled with corruption. This was personal for him too; like Johnbull, Momoh also quit school for the diamond fields when his father died. He quit to become a peanut seller, only to start up again in 2012 as a sponsor, once he scraped together enough cash to buy the necessary tools for his team. He closed his eyes in a brief prayer. "I too have to have faith," he said. If the government failed, so too would his plan to change the economics of diamond mining in Sierra Leone.

But four months later, after national elections brought in a new government that won largely on a campaign to knock out corruption, work in the village has begun in earnest. The foundations for a new clinic and school have been laid, and a well has been dug. The progress is a source of relief for Momoh, who has been assured by government officials that construction will ramp up further in September, at the end of the rainy season. But now is not the time to let go, he says. He will still need to make sure that the clinic is staffed and stocked, and the teachers for the school are paid. "I have to make sure that diamond funds are spent in that community. If anybody goes to that village, I want them to ask the question, 'Why is this village different from all the other villages?' Then the story will be told, and that will encourage other people to bring their diamonds to the government when they find them, so they too can get the maximum benefit. Then my task will be done." Paul Saquee, Kono's district chief, says he has no doubt the government will deliver: "I don't have any reason to believe that they are not going to do that. We will hold the ministry of mines accountable."

The stakes are higher than just Koryardu's future. Changing the reputation of artisanal mining, a vital source of employment for young men in Sierra Leone, could be essential for the country. If consumers in America, Europe and Asia stop buying gemstones because they are tainted by human-rights violations, it will only make things worse for Sierra Leone, where 55% of exports come from mineral resources.

The civil war–era blood diamonds deserve opprobrium, Momoh says. But this rock, the first major find since the end of the war, is different. Momoh dubbed it the Peace Diamond as a way to distance it from Sierra Leone's gruesome past. "Our diamonds aren't for war anymore. They are for development," he says. "When the government utilizes the money they took from the diamond to develop a village, the whole world will see that, indeed, diamonds can make the world a better place."

To Rapaport, the Peace Diamond could set the stage for industry-wide change. Rapaport was one of the early proponents of the Kimberley Process, an internationally recognized system designed to prevent the trade of conflict diamonds. Like many in the industry, he says it didn't go far enough. Diamonds in your local jewelry store may not be funding wars anymore, but that doesn't mean they are free of the injustices, human-rights abuses and environmental degradation of a fundamentally exploitative industry. Graff bid significantly more on the Peace Diamond than anyone else because of its story, argues Rapaport, and other high-profile diamantaires are likely to follow.

> 'OUR DIAMONDS AREN'T FOR WAR ANYMORE. THEY ARE FOR DEVELOPMENT.'
>
> —PASTOR EMMANUEL MOMOH

But the Peace Diamond is a unique case. Most diamonds aren't big enough to merit publicity, notes Michael Gibb, a campaign leader for conflict resources at Global Witness, an advocacy group for the beneficial use of natural resources. Instead, they are aggregated into packets that are traded on private exchanges with little accountability. Public auctions are about as rare as, well, a 709-carat diamond. The irony, says Gibb, "is that somehow this diamond is seen as an exception, even as some very commonsense practices are being put into place: making sure that the guy who found it gets his fair share, that the community gets their fair share and the government gets its fair share. This should happen with every diamond, but it does not."

THE COMMUNITY MAY still be waiting for the full benefits of its share, but the sale of the diamond has already changed the lives of Momoh and his team. The pastor received $2.4 million. After expenses and payouts to local chiefs, the landowner and the diggers, who were due 23% according to their original contract, he was left with a little less than $1 million. Each of his five diggers got about $115,000.

After the initial hype, the final amount was a bit of a disappointment, admits Johnbull, but it's still a fortune in a country where nearly three-quarters of the population live on less than a dollar a day. It has also been a burden to this group of men, who are accustomed to living among the poorest of the poor. Like lottery winners, they have been besieged by friends, relatives and miscellaneous supplicants

demanding handouts. Momoh estimates that he has spent thousands this way. "It is very bad in our culture when one man has something and everyone else has nothing," he says. "If you have something, you have to share it. If you don't, you are a bad man."

But charity is one thing. Scams and financial illiteracy are a bigger concern for Momoh. As a former digger himself, he has seen too many friends strike it rich, only to blow their cash and end up in penury a few years later. He wants to see his diggers' lives changed for the long term, not least because of the Peace Diamond's notoriety. He expects journalists to return to Koryardu to see the diamond's legacy. "If the diggers have no money left, they won't say, 'Oh, I misused my money.' No, they will say, 'Pastor Momoh didn't give me enough.' That will be the story when the money runs out. That is what I am afraid of."

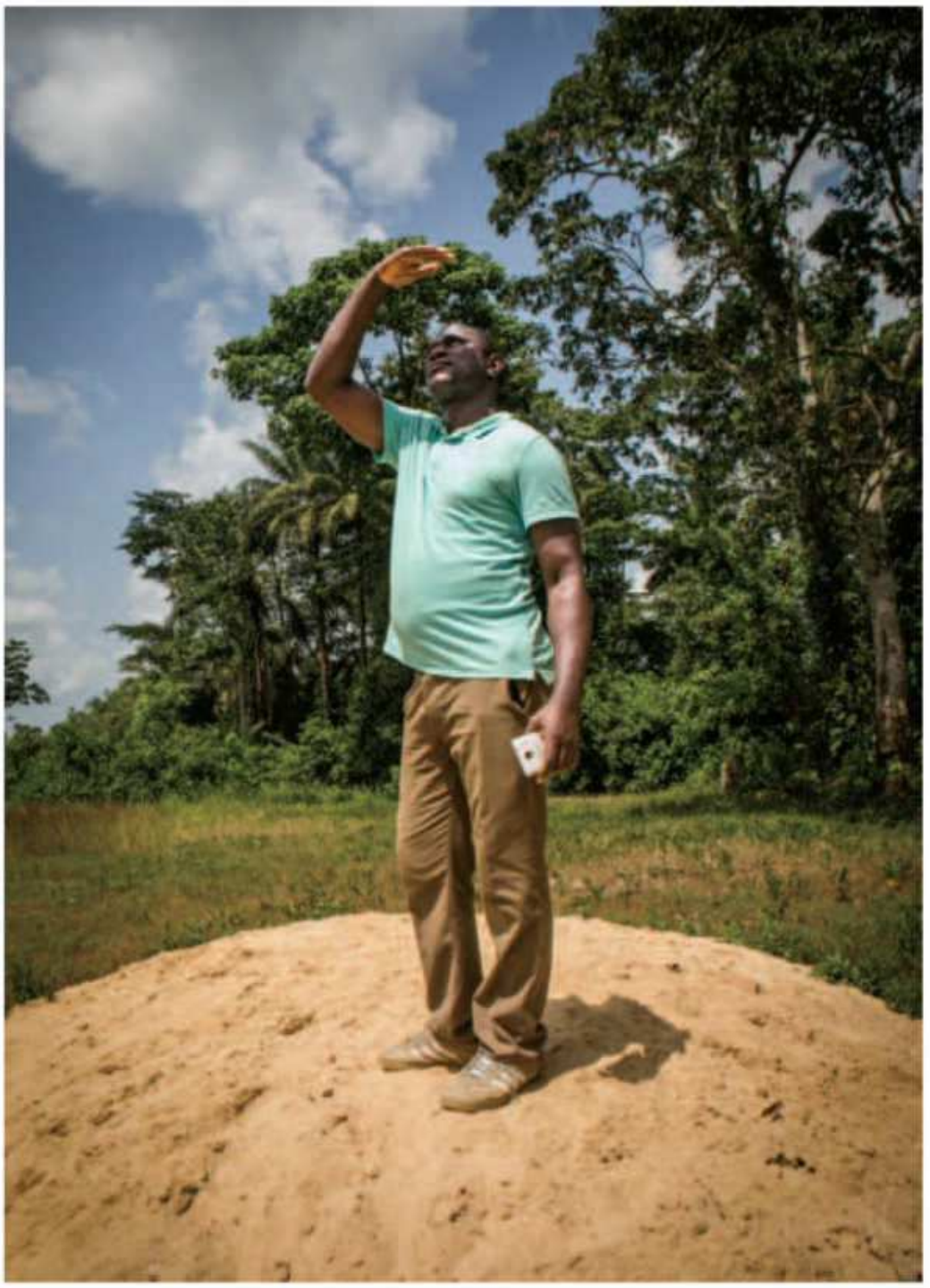
Rather than hand each digger his share of the diamond's sale in cash, Momoh set them up with bank accounts. At his urging, each of the men purchased property. One invested the rest of his money with the bank and plans to live off the interest. Another opened a small business. Two got married (one to a second wife), and one, says the pastor with a wince, has regrettably started drinking.

Johnbull, however, decided to invest in an education. At first, Momoh was thrilled when the teenager told him he intended to return to school. Momoh also regrets not finishing school, but at his age he doesn't see a way to start over again. Instead, he is using the rest of his money to build a school in Freetown so that a new generation won't have to make the same sacrifices that he and Johnbull did.

But the pastor's dreams of enrolling Johnbull in the school came crashing down when the young miner informed him that instead of staying in Sierra Leone, he would seek his fortune as a student in Canada. A friend said it would be easy to get a visa.

Momoh, who has been rejected twice for a visa to the U.K., suspected a scam at worst, and extreme naiveté at best. Johnbull can barely speak English, and he doesn't remember how to write. "I told him, At least go to school here first. Then later you can go to Canada and finish your education. One hundred and fifteen thousand dollars is a lot of money in Sierra Leone. In Canada, it is nothing."

Undeterred, Johnbull went through with his plan, handing over $15,000 to a broker who promised to help him with the paperwork. On March 3, nearly a year after he found the diamond, he shoved all his belongings into a suitcase for what he thought would be a brief stop to pick up a visa at the Canadian High Commission in Ghana before booking an onward flight to Canada. He had already spent most of his money—$50,000 for a house in Freetown that stands empty, a couple thousand to rent a house for his siblings and "a lot, I don't know where, to help my friends, to go shopping, to buy my plane ticket." He had about $10,000 left in his account. He packed a knitted beanie because he had heard it was cold in Canada, and extra supplies of toothpaste, deodorant and acne cream, in case they were too costly abroad.



JANE HAHN FOR TIME

Diamond mining team sponsor Pastor Emmanuel Momoh stands where a new school will be built with money from the diamond's sale

Johnbull figured it would take only a few days to get a visa. Instead, it took weeks to even get an interview, and ultimately he was rejected. He applied again, for Germany, to no avail. Finally, exhausting all his options, and most of the rest of his money, he reluctantly returned to Sierra Leone on July 3. Now he is back in Freetown, unable to find a job, but unwilling to return to the diamond mines of Koryardu. The shame, he says, would be too much. From what he has heard, the village is finally starting to profit from his find. Returning empty-handed would show everyone there that he has not. Still, he has faith that things will turn out just fine. "That day when I picked up that shiny rock, I had no idea it was going to change my life. I am praying to God that tomorrow will bring me another blessing." ☐

SER

As her comeback reaches its biggest stage, the tennis icon opens up about motivation, insecurities and life as a working mom

BY SEAN GREGORY

ON A BRIGHT, CLOUDLESS EARLY-AUGUST DAY IN Silicon Valley, Serena Williams opens the back door of the Spanish-style home she shares with her husband, tech entrepreneur Alexis Ohanian, and walks down a flower-lined path to her office. Lemon trees bloom near the entrance to the backyard tennis court; in the clear distance, airplanes slip over the San Francisco Bay. Serena—who long ago ascended into the pantheon of stars known by a single name—swaps her pink Crocs for sneakers, and grabs a broom and dustpan to sweep pine needles off the hard court.

Just three nights earlier, Serena suffered the worst defeat of her 23-year professional career, a 6-1, 6-0 drubbing at the hands of Johanna Konta in the opening round of a U.S. Open tune-up tournament down the road in San Jose. That it was only her fifth tournament since giving birth to her daughter in September—or that in the fourth, Wimbledon, she made it to the finals in one of the most spectacular displays of will, skill and grit in the history of the game—didn't make the loss hurt any less.

ENA, IN PROGRESS,

PHOTOGRAPH BY ALESSANDRA SANGUINETTI FOR TIME

Serena has won 23 Grand Slam singles titles, one short of Margaret Court's all-time record. The U.S. Open, which begins on Aug. 27 in New York City, is her last chance to even the score this year. And with age and the demands of parenthood looming over her singular career, Serena knows every chance matters. So, time to work.

She pounds shots from every angle, moving side to side, sending one ball screaming crosscourt at a cone target near the baseline. After a few hundred swings, her fitness guru, a white-haired sexagenarian named Mackie Shilstone, suggests she take a 30-second break. She insists on 20. He offers her water. She refuses.

Finally, Serena calls time. She sits on a wooden bench and fiddles on her iPhone. She's tinkering with designs for her new clothing line when Alexis Olympia Ohanian Jr. waddles out the back door. Mom's thwops and grunts have woken her from her nap. Serena leaps up to guide Olympia down the stairs to the court, counting off the steps in French: *"Un, deux, un, deux."*

'I LOOKED AT OLYMPIA AND I WAS LIKE, "LISTEN, MOMMY NEEDS TO GET HER BODY BACK."'

The moment can't last. Serena isn't done with her workout. Shilstone's waiting to chase her all over the court and make her dodge tennis balls he tosses at her midsection. Olympia is led back inside, and Mom digs into more ground strokes. But for the rest of the training session, she steals glances at the house. "I wonder," Serena says between backhands, "what my baby is doing?"

Millions of working parents wrestle with this question every day. In cubicles and call centers, at restaurants and on assembly lines, a large portion of the world's workforce consistently thinks about their children. That concern can be deep, gnawing, even painful for anyone, but no working mother on the planet is quite like Serena Williams.

Becoming one almost killed her. The pregnancy was easy, she says, but the delivery led to a series of complications, including a life-threatening pulmonary embolism and hematoma that required multiple surgeries. She spent the next six weeks mostly in bed, too weak to get up on her own, let alone swing a tennis racket. Even as she gradually regained her strength, Serena couldn't shake a sense of sadness, a feeling that she had done something wrong or wasn't doing enough. She had gone through hell to have Olympia, and she loved her like it. "I didn't think I'd be this attached," Serena says. "It's difficult to leave her."

That's a tricky proposition for a world-class athlete. Professional tennis all but requires selfishness—the time needed to train, to travel and to maintain competitive focus blot out virtually all else. Parenting is essentially the opposite. You are no longer the point. Yet at 36, an age when even the greatest champions tend to lose a step, Serena is determined to show that it doesn't have to be so. Maybe not everyone can do it. Maybe just her. In her two tournaments since Wimbledon, she couldn't make it past the second round. But maybe trying will be inspiration enough.

Mothers the world over rallied around her remarkable run at Wimbledon, which Serena says has helped carry her through the low moments. "I dedicated that to all the moms out there who've been through a lot," she says. "Some days, I cry. I'm really sad. I've had meltdowns. It's been a really tough 11 months. If I can do it, you guys can do it too."

Serena, as her vanquished opponents know, is different. And yet no modern athlete who has reached her level of stardom has ever returned from so difficult a childbirth, at her age, in a grueling individual sport like tennis, to claim a major global championship. And since Wimbledon, she's faced a particularly rough stretch in her personal life. The man who killed her older sister Yetunde Price was released from prison. The postpartum symptoms haven't fully gone away, and she says separating herself from Olympia has become even harder. Why keep at it?

"I'm not done yet, simple," Serena tells me, as we drive into San Francisco one evening for a speaking engagement. She needs tennis as much as her sport needs her. It's the one thing, as a mother, she can do solely for herself. "My story doesn't end here."

PREVIOUS SPREAD: MAGNUM PHOTOS; RICHARD SHIRO—GETTY IMAGES

Serena's husband Ohanian, holding Olympia during a Fed Cup match, has brought their daughter to most of her mother's matches since she returned to tennis

SERENA WAS TWO MONTHS PREGNANT when she beat her sister Venus in the 2017 Australian Open final, a victory that broke Steffi Graf's Open-era record of 22 major titles. (Unfair, Venus joked later: it was two against one.) Serena is convinced Olympia knows she's a Grand Slam champion, describing her walk as a cocksure, "little bowlegged strut."

Serena met Ohanian in Italy in 2015. They were engaged by the end of the following year and married in November 2017, in New Orleans, after Olympia was born. "I always assumed I'd marry a black guy," Serena says. "I always felt that I could relate more with a black guy, that we'd have more struggles in common, you know?" But the pair clicked.

Their bond was tested fast. Olympia was born through emergency C-section. The next day, Serena began to feel out of breath. She suffered a pulmonary embolism in 2011, and thought this might be another one. Serena demanded a CT scan for her lungs. "If she doesn't understand her body as well as she does, and the doctor doesn't listen to her, I don't necessarily think we're sitting here," says her agent, Jill Smoller, in the players' lounge before Serena's match in San Jose.

The scan showed blood clots. Coughing from the embolism caused her C-section wound to pop; in surgery, doctors found a large hematoma in her abdomen. Another procedure inserted a filter into her veins to prevent more clots. She kept the filter after it was removed, and puts it on her kitchen table as we talk. It's shaped like a badminton birdie. "How was that in my veins?" Serena asks.

Ohanian remembers that harrowing stretch as a plunge from highest high to lowest low. "It's a lot to change gears from being really happy and thrilled about bringing this life into the world to having to kiss your wife goodbye and praying she'll be O.K.," he says.

There were five surgeries, all told, and the first few months of recovery were particularly tough. The couple hunkered down at their home in South Florida, while Serena's mother Oracene moved in to help. For weeks, Ohanian lifted Serena out of bed in the morning.

Olympia's birth, and the frantic, fumbling bond of new parents, brought the family closer together. They now spend most of their time together in South Florida, and also have homes in Southern and Northern California, where Ohanian has installed a PlayStation near Olympia's playpen. "Yeah, he's a nerd," says Serena. They also have a stocked bar in her playroom. "Sometimes," she says, laughing, "you need it." Serena even managed to implement "no cell phone" Sundays despite Ohanian's full-time, device-dependent work life, but she'll catch her husband in the act. "He doesn't put it down until I look at him," she says.

Her desire to play tennis again, however, never wavered. Williams began slowly, doing some light hitting in Florida. By early 2018, she felt strong enough to return to the pro tour. The results have been mixed. She lost in the first round in her second tournament, in March, and then reached the fourth round of the French Open in June before a pectoral injury forced her to withdraw.

Serena's coach, Patrick Mouratoglou, says she made choices that put her family above her career, including staying home with Olympia and Ohanian rather than going early to Europe for clay-court prep. "I felt the decisions were taken through the angle of the family, where before, every decision was taken through the angle of tennis," says Mouratoglou. "This is a big difference. Even if you are Serena, if you want to be successful in tennis, tennis has to be priority No. 1."

Breastfeeding was another tension point. Serena nursed Olympia for the first eight months, even though she believes it made it harder for her to get back into playing shape. "You have the power to sustain the life that God gave her," she says. "You have the power to make her happy, to calm her. At any other time in your life, you don't have this magical superpower."

Once Serena did arrive in France for clay-court training, Mouratoglou told her she should stop nursing, for the sake of her game. "It's absolutely hard to take from a guy," Serena says. "He's not a woman, he doesn't understand that connection, that the best time of the day for me was when I tried to

feed her. I've spent my whole life making everyone happy, just servicing it seems like everyone. And this is something I wanted to do."

But Serena also wanted to get back on top, and she says she came around to the idea that she needed to stop nursing Olympia in order to make it happen. "I looked at Olympia, and I was like, 'Listen, Mommy needs to get her body back, so Mommy's going to stop now.' We had a really good conversation. We talked it out."

Serena then committed to Mouratoglou's training plan. "I've never seen her work like that before," says her coach. In July, Serena made her thrilling run on the Wimbledon grass, before falling to Angelique Kerber in the final. The tennis world was floored.

"I've never met an athlete that can just produce the highest level of hunger, desire and mental determination other than her," says Chris Evert, who won 18 Grand Slam singles titles in her career. "I'm in awe that she got to the finals."

'I NEVER UNDERSTOOD WOMEN BEFORE, WHEN THEY PUT THEMSELVES IN SECOND OR THIRD PLACE. AND IT'S SO EASY TO DO.'

Still, Serena feels like she let the opportunity slip away. She stopped scouting her opponents so closely, since they tend to bring their game to another level against her. But she decided to prep for Kerber. "I really wish I hadn't done that," she says. "Because she played much, much harder than she's ever played in her life. Hit nothing like she normally does. I was like, O.K., this is classic. Why did I do this? Just focus on Serena. That's when I do my best."

BACK IN SILICON VALLEY, Serena is behind the wheel of her white Lincoln Navigator, maneuvering the tank-size SUV into a metered parking spot outside her local Equinox. After her backyard hitting session, she agreed to a 30-minute strength and agility workout with Shilstone. But every minute at the gym counts as lost time with Olympia, and she sets the timer on her phone, promising to vanish after a half hour.

She means it. Olympia is almost always on her mother's mind. On the ride to the gym, Serena spotted a deer and her fawn in the front yard of someone's house. She stopped the car, rolled down the window, and gasped. "Oh my God, are you serious? That's me, that's Momma, that's Serena." She then looked toward the fawn. "That's the baby, that's Olympia." She gazed at the deer for a few beats more, then wondered aloud if the baby deer had a "Qai Qai." That's the name of Olympia's favorite doll.

Like so many new parents, Serena still marvels at how strongly she feels pulled to her daughter, finding joy in how Olympia washes her hands in the dog bowl, smooshes avocado into her hair and shot puts Tupperware across the kitchen. "Sometimes she just wants Mommy, she doesn't want anyone else," Serena says, nearly choking up. "I still have to learn a balance of being there for her, and being there for me. I'm working on it. I never understood women before, when they put themselves in second or third place. And it's so easy to do. It's so easy to do."

Early on, eager to bond with Olympia, Serena was hesitant to let others even hold her. "She was a bit of a baby hog," says her sister Isha Price. "She was putting way too much pressure on herself. But that's what she does."

Serena says now it was born of a deep insecurity that she was somehow failing as a mom. "It was crazy to hear her in a state of, 'I just don't know what to do with the different emotions,'" says the singer Kelly Rowland, part of a small group of moms Serena leans on for advice. "It was hard to wrap my head around it. I'm like, She can do everything."

That's the thing about being a parent, though, particularly a working mom. No matter your resources—and Serena, who has won more than $86 million in prize money, and Ohanian, a co-founder of Reddit and a prominent venture capitalist, have far more than most, including child-care help—it's still easy to feel like you're somehow failing. The stress of juggling family and career has brought out the same insecurities in Serena that other parents feel. "I don't think I'm doing it right," she says.

She fell prey to peer pressure on social media, posting a photo of her post-pregnancy body on Instagram. She says now that she used a waist trainer to push in her stomach. "I hated that I fell victim to that," she says. "It puts a lot of pressure on women, young and old."

Her vulnerability as a mom is a stark contrast to her poise on the court and, increasingly, off it. Since returning to the tour, for example, Serena has spoken out about gender discrimination in the workplace, questioning why women coming back from maternity leave should lose their seeds in a tournament draw. Williams was the top-ranked player in the world before she had Olympia. At the French Open, she did not receive a seed—a penalty that could dissuade other players from having children.

"It would be nice to recognize that women shouldn't be treated differently because they take time to bring life into this world," Serena says. She's not the first player to come back after giving birth, but it wasn't until she did that the U.S. Open pledged to incorporate maternity decisions into its seeding process.

Another sore spot: discrepancies in drug testing. The United States Anti-Doping Agency has tested Serena five times in 2018, according to its records. Meanwhile Sloane Stephens, who won the U.S. Open a year ago, has been tested once. Serena called such

Serena's comeback has been mixed; she lost in the second round at the Cincinnati Masters, pictured here on Aug. 14

JOHN MINCHILLO—AP/SHUTTERSTOCK

differences "discrimination" on Twitter and thinks it's because some people won't accept that she's clean. "Look at me," she says, glancing at her herself in a mirror at home. "I was born this way. They're like, 'Oh, she can't be that great, she must be doing something.' I don't even lift weights." Serena laughs. "It's all God, you know," she says. "But whatever."

Serena is used to being a target. It began when she and Venus started rising up the ranks of a predominantly white sport, and has continued even as she became the face of the game. Last year, while Serena was pregnant, the former top men's player Ilie Nastase made a racist comment about her child, and in the spring, the owner of a pro tournament in Madrid took a shot at her weight.

"They sure don't throw a dart at other people, huh?" Serena says after I ask what accounts for the hate. She says, rightly, that the vitriol is far outweighed by her millions of fans, before considering the question again. "I'm a black woman," she says. "Women in general are not treated the same as men who've had the same amount of success. And then, being a black woman, doing something historically that's never been done, it's easy to feel like, 'We've always picked on people of this color. So I'm O.K. to continue to do it.'" Serena says she thinks black men have it even tougher. In February, NBC released a documentary she narrated on the 1968 Summer Olympics, and she marvels at Tommie Smith and John Carlos, who famously raised their fists during the national anthem to protest America's civil rights record. "They sacrificed everything," Serena says.

So did Colin Kaepernick, I mention. Serena owns a small stake in the Miami Dolphins, and she supports the right of NFL players to protest during the national anthem."He hasn't lost his joy," she replies.

Serena has met the former San Francisco 49ers quarterback twice: once before he started his protests in 2016, and once after he became Donald Trump's bogeyman. Since taking a knee during "The Star Spangled Banner," Kaepernick has raised $1 million for various nonprofits. "Colin is happy with what he's doing," she says. "Some people are different. He's just different." She doubts an NFL team will hire him, especially after he filed a collusion grievance against the league. But she's convinced Kaepernick would win a Super Bowl. Few believe in the power of determination like Serena. "He'd have so much to prove," she says. "I would. I can't imagine he would be any different. 'Man, I'm about to show out. Y'all gonna see stuff you've never seen before.'"

After her workout at Equinox—30 minutes, on the dot—Serena drives the SUV back home and lingers in her attached garage. She's beginning to talk, for the first time publicly, about a painful discovery from three nights earlier. She was in a players' area before her match in San Jose, with about 10 minutes until showtime, when she pulled out her phone and checked Instagram. There, she learned that the man convicted of fatally shooting her sister Yetunde Price, in 2003, had been released on parole earlier this year. "I couldn't shake it out of my mind," Serena

Serena, holding 11-month-old Olympia at their home outside of San Francisco

says. She laughs, which she sometimes does during uncomfortable moments. Price had three children, who were 11, 9, and 5 at the time of the their mother's death. "It was hard because all I think about is her kids," she says, "and what they meant to me. And how much I love them."

She takes a deep breath. "No matter what, my sister is not coming back for good behavior," she says. "It's unfair that she'll never have an opportunity to hug me. But also . . ." she pauses, the thought hanging in the air. "The Bible talks about forgiveness." Does she forgive the killer? "I'm not there yet," she says. "I would like to practice what I preach, and teach Olympia that as well. I want to forgive. I have to get there. I'll be there."

SERENA WILL BRING all of this onto the sport's brightest stage at the U.S. Open in late August, the final Grand Slam tournament of the year. She's playing for something bigger than herself now, which can bring outsize expectations. "I really hope she gets to 25," says Billie Jean King, a pioneering 12-time Grand Slam singles champion. King says she's seen signs that the fire is back in Serena's belly. "It's in everything she's telling the world," she says. "She gets this look, then she puts that leg up and she gets that fist going. I love it when she gets like that." King even thinks Serena could be President one day. Serena laughs off the suggestion.

The bright lights of Flushing Meadows have been the site of some of Serena's greatest triumphs—she's won the Open six times—but her last two appearances ended bitterly. In 2015, Roberta Vinci shocked Serena in the semifinals, denying her bid to become the first player since 1988 to win all four major tournaments in the same year. The next year, she again was upset in the semis, falling to No. 10 seed Karolina Pliskova. "I'm trying to get a new vibe there," Serena says, "but I'm not going in there thinking I'm going to lose. That's not being Serena. That's being someone else."

Serena wants Olympia to see and remember her mom winning a Grand Slam title. When I mention that some kids might not begin recalling specific events until around age 5, she says she hopes Olympia's memory will be more advanced. Or maybe she'll will keep going, long past when her peers have given it up. "I don't plan on that," Serena says. Then again, she never figured she'd still be playing at 36. If someone would have asked her a decade ago if she'd still be swinging a racket in 2018? "I would have said, Absolutely no, impossible, no chance," she says. "I'd bet my life on it."

Priorities have changed. She wants Olympia to have a sibling. She's learning on the fly, like all parents. She still gets down, and has moments when she doesn't want to hang out with Olympia and then feels terrible for it. And then there's all the time she can't bear to pry herself away, despite knowing that her game will suffer for it. But mostly, Serena is learning to recognize the swings, tell herself they're normal and fight the urge to beat herself up. "Nothing about me right now is perfect," she says. "But I'm perfectly Serena."

Sometimes a good cry helps. And sometimes lessons come the hard way. San Jose was one of her first nighttime matches since she gave birth. Before Olympia, the day of a night match was all about Serena. Practice early, nap, focus. But this time, she tended to her daughter. She took a little rest, but woke up when Olympia did. She fed her, made sure she's O.K. "I need to be more selfish for just those couple of days," she says. "I keep telling myself she's not going to remember that I spent an extra two hours with her. I should be taking that two hours and focusing on my career."

Earlier, Serena says as much to Olympia in the kitchen. She wipes yogurt off the baby's face and swings her around the room, much to Olympia's delight. "Momma's going to make you very sad right now," Serena tells her. "Momma has to go to the gym. But it hurts me more than it hurts you."

Serena then steps into the garage and heads out. Back to work. Again.

ALESSANDRA SANGUINETTI—MAGNUM PHOTOS FOR TIME

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Culture

SEEING IS BELIEVING

WHAT THE RISE OF CRAZY RICH ASIANS *SIGNALS FOR THE FUTURE OF HOLLYWOOD*

BY KAREN K. HO

PHOTOGRAPH BY JUCO FOR TIME

For Constance Wu, photographed in Los Angeles on July 30, the movie represents a milestone

There's a scene in *Crazy Rich Asians* in which Rachel Chu, the lead character played by Constance Wu, is in a game of poker. Her hand is much weaker than her opponent's—he's got two pairs—but she fearlessly bluffs and puts in all her chips.

He folds, only to be crushed when she reveals her cards. As Rachel, a professor of economics and game theory at New York University, tells her students, "The key is playing to win, instead of trying not to lose."

To many in Hollywood, *Crazy Rich Asians* might look like a risky bet. It's the first modern story with an all-Asian cast and an Asian-American lead in 25 years; the last, *The Joy Luck Club,* was in 1993. It's an earnest romantic comedy in a sea of action and superhero films. It features two leads who are new to movies: Wu, an actor most recognizable for her role on the ABC series *Fresh Off the Boat,* and Henry Golding, a virtual unknown who last worked as a travel host for the BBC. And it makes use of a multilingual script that flips seamlessly from English to Cantonese to Mandarin and back again.

But if you understand the cultural forces that are at play—an underserved audience, the rapidly expanding influence of Asian culture and the power of the global box office, this $30 million movie doesn't seem like much of a gamble at all. In fact, it seems destined to be a hit. *Crazy Rich Asians* is pure escapist fantasy, a Cinderella story about an Asian-American woman meeting her boyfriend's colorful and, yes, crazy-rich family in Singapore. It also boasts a relatable rom-com heroine, opulent set pieces and witty dialogue. It has already won over critics: the film has a 96% score on Rotten Tomatoes.

That doesn't mean getting this movie made was easy. An early prospective producer suggested casting a white woman as the lead. Later, the filmmakers turned down a lucrative deal with Netflix to make the film with Warner Bros., which guaranteed it a higher-profile release. This mattered, both for fans of Kevin Kwan's best-selling book series, which inspired the film, and for Asian audiences the world over who have waited decades to see themselves represented onscreen in all their diversity. Hollywood has grown increasingly dependent on Asian financiers and global audiences to turn a profit. *Crazy Rich Asians* has the potential to revive the romantic comedy—a genre that has foundered at the box office recently—for a massive general audience. By representing Asian people so vividly, the film could set a precedent for many more stories like this one to be told. It's coming at the right moment. After years of work in the game of Hollywood, *Crazy Rich Asians* is poised to win.

FOR WU, the film's success is about so much more than just its ability to establish her as a marquee star. Wu first broke out on a sitcom, and she has killer comedic timing—but she's also deadly serious, and fiercely outspoken, about issues of representation and equality.

For decades, Asian Americans working in the film and television industry have carried the impossible burden of fixing a system that has tended to punish, stereotype and ignore them. "They think we'll say yes to anything and we'll just be grateful," Wu tells me as we walk around the Silver Lake Reservoir in Los Angeles a few weeks before the film's release.

Wu is, nonetheless, grateful. With her experience on *Fresh Off the Boat,* the first network comedy to feature Asian-American leads since Margaret Cho's show *All-American Girl* in 1994, the Taiwanese-American actor has now had the unique experience of being featured in two milestone projects about Asian Americans. This matters to her. Both she and the film's director, Jon M. Chu, she says, are Asian-American pioneers. "We are not supporting roles," Wu says. "We are stars on our own journeys."

Her casting in this film as Rachel signals that she's the most bankable Asian-American movie star in a generation. But Wu has spent years discussing the state of Asian representation, both in interviews and with fans, and a sense of pressure has made her terrified of what will happen when the film is finally out.

Behind the smiling Instagram posts and glossy photo shoots ahead of the movie's release, Wu tells me she has been having panic attacks and crying every night. She's not typically an anxious person,

SANJA BUCKO—WARNER BROS.

but she's sensitive, which is part of what makes her such a great, funny actor and outspoken advocate of women's issues and greater diversity in her field. It also means that she's vulnerable to criticism about everything from her hair to her pronunciation of Mandarin to her love life. "I'm really scared of being such a public figure and opening myself up to scrutiny," Wu says. "I'm very panicked that I'm not going to be able to handle it, and I'm just going to have hurt feelings for a really long time."

For so long, Asian-American women have been told to be grateful for whatever they get, and that being objectified is better than being ignored. But Wu's clear ideas about the type of work she wants to do, along with her race and gender, have made her a target on and off sets. "I couldn't do a shoot because I had a sick family member, and I was punished for it," she says. "Even saying I'm worthy of being a leading lady—people don't like it when a woman asserts her worth." But her experience on *Crazy Rich Asians,* being supported by people with the same commitment to representation that's guided her career, was more positive. "At the end of the day, the thing that drives people and moves people is truth and story and humanity," she says. "If you make sure all your work has depth, even if it's something fun and light like a rom-com, that's how you make good work."

Michelle Yeoh, center, worked with Jon M. Chu, left, to add dimension to her character: "Where she was coming from—that was the most important thing for me."

IN KWAN'S BOOK, Rachel is Chinese American, raised by an immigrant single mom with decidedly American values. Her boyfriend Nick Young is the scion of a Singaporean family that is described as "richer than God." When Rachel goes to the Southeast Asian country to meet Nick's relatives for the first time, she's exposed to a world of privilege unlike anything she's ever seen. While the stories may seem outlandish, the details are from Kwan's own life. He drew on his upbringing as a member of one of Singapore's wealthy families, his experience as an immigrant kid in suburban Houston and his observations of his friends and relatives during visits to Asia as they became even richer.

At the time Kwan sold the rights to *Crazy Rich Asians,* he was already tasked with writing its sequel, *China Rich Girlfriend.* But as one of the film's executive producers from the start, he organized a research tour of Asia for other producers, answered questions from screenwriters Adele Lim and Peter Chiarelli, and helped pick the director.

Kwan and the other producers set a high bar. That included independently developing the screenplay for two years, sending casting directors to search for Asian actors in several countries outside of the U.S. and seeking an eye-watering amount of high fashion to rival that in *The Devil Wears Prada.*

The viewer encounters this glamorous world through Rachel's eyes, making the film function as much as lifestyle porn as it does as a romantic comedy. It was critical to get the details right. One scene features a "Paul Newman" Rolex Daytona, which holds the record for the most expensive watch ever sold. Several pieces from Hong Kong–based bespoke jeweler Carnet also make an appearance. "These women wouldn't wear Cartier," Kwan says of the matriarchs in his story. "Cartier is too common for them."

Having directed, along with two *Step Up* movies and the blockbuster *G.I. Joe: Retaliation,* a pair of documentaries about Justin Bieber, Chu knew a lot about expectations from fans and how even small details could be the subject of fierce scrutiny. "We had a mah-jongg specialist come in and design a game for us and teach us," Chu says, in order to nail a climactic tête-à-tête between Rachel and Nick's mother Eleanor, played by the venerable actor Michelle Yeoh. For day-to-day details, such as what food should be served and which language should be used, many of the cast and crew members, but especially Kwan, were treated as on-set experts. "It just opened a channel of communication on a set where it's usually, 'Just do what the director says,'" Chu says. "It's going to exist forever on film—you better do it right."

EVOKING THE SIGHTS and sounds of an outdoor market and the gleam of ultra-exclusive Mouawad jewelry was important, but even more crucial was the film's ability to represent the profound tensions within the Asian experience—especially the differences in identifying with Asia vs. the diaspora. Rachel is part of a group that isn't the dominant culture; when she goes to Singapore, she's surrounded by people who look more like her, but the way she grew up makes her an outsider.

Moreover, despite the movie's title, Asian isn't a monolithic identity—something that's easier to understand from the vantage point of a cosmopolitan place like Singapore, which serves as a nexus for many Asian experiences. But Hollywood has tended to treat it as one category. "Obviously, Korean is different than Chinese, which is different from the Vietnamese culture, but the way the [U.S.] culture has treated us is a point that we can probably find some common ground on," Wu says. She's frustrated by people who don't seem to understand the differences, especially in the limited number of period and independent films featuring Asian actors. "They think that having an Asian in their movie is the same thing as having an Asian American, and it's just not," she says.

While the film is charming you with its romantic-comedy affectations, it's slyly doing another kind of work as a commentary on class: Rachel's background is working-class, while her college roommate Goh Peik Lin, a Singapore native, is hilariously rendered as nouveau riche—and then the Youngs are so old-money, they don't even talk about it. There are Asians from several countries, with different accents and different values—funny housewives, total jerks, devious socialites, airheaded actors and sassy friends. Oh, and hot guys with great abs too.

Few major studio productions explicitly aim to educate their audience, and non-Asian viewers going to this film may just want to see a glitzy rom-com. But many might walk out with a deeper understanding of the class gradations even just within Singaporean society, and the collectivist vs. individualist tensions found in many Asian families. And there's no obvious stereotyping. For decades, female Asian actors have been asked to portray stereotypes like the vindictive dragon

WHY *CRAZY RICH ASIANS* IS GROUNDBREAKING FOR PEOPLE LIKE ME

BY SUYIN HAYNES

Crazy Rich Asians is not just a classic romance. It's also a love letter from Kevin Kwan to his native Singapore and to the region as a whole. As a Malaysian-British Londoner now living in Hong Kong, I share the same affection that Kwan does for this part of the world. Away from the Gucci outfits and Michelin-starred restaurants, the more frugal elements call to mind my experiences here, from the tapping of chopsticks demanding a taste of *char kuay teow* at a hawker food center to a crowd of wedding guests toasting, "*Yum seng!*"

The pictures Kwan paints also resonated with my mother, who read the books beside me this summer vacation and reminisced about her childhood. From describing the sizzle of *goreng pisang* (or banana fritters—a street-food snack popular across Southeast Asia) to the delicate pearl inlays of Peranakan-Chinese antique furniture, Kwan brings to life the shared histories of so many of us both in the region and in the diaspora.

"The first people who really embraced [*Crazy Rich Asians*] were the chick-lit audience," Kwan has said of his novel. That remains a genre largely dominated by white, Western settings and characters—and for me, it felt groundbreaking to recognize scenes of my life authentically represented in popular culture. For one thing, it was the first time I had read a novel incorporating Hokkien slang, a dialect traditionally spoken among the Chinese community in my mother's birthplace of Penang Island, Malaysia.

For all its fabulous froth and name-dropping galore, the franchise raises important questions about race and representation. The novels have been criticized for failing to incorporate Singapore's minority populations, such as Indians and Malays.

The screen adaptation too has sparked debate—particularly

Awkwafina and Nico Santos give Wu a makeover that rivals transformations from classic rom-coms

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the casting of male lead Henry Golding, who is half-white. "Where are the boundaries?" Golding, a fellow Malaysian Brit, replied to the criticism. "Where are the lines drawn for saying that you cannot play this character because you're not fully Asian?" I too am often reminded that despite having an Asian name, I don't "look" typically Asian. To me, Golding's inclusion in the cast is an important part of making a growing mixed-race generation more visible. It's also a reminder that while we should celebrate the existence of *Crazy Rich Asians* as a milestone, we should also be able to critique it.

We still have a long way to go to elevate the diverse stories coming from Southeast Asia, across cultures, countries and races. But to see familiar faces, places, phrases and even recipes depicted with the warm tenderness underneath *Crazy Rich Asians'* glittering exterior is a start. For me, that attention to detail is where the real wealth of the story lies.

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lady, the submissive China doll, the nerdy overachiever or the inert sex worker. *Crazy Rich Asians* avoids all of these, instead showing the nuances of Asian women's experiences across generations.

Even Eleanor, who butts heads with Rachel, isn't a typical potential monster-in-law—she just comes from a different world and thinks only of what's best for her son and the families that depend on him. "In the old traditional sense, the elders came first. They were always put ahead of us," Yeoh explains. "That's how we showed filial piety and love." The film, Yeoh says, represents "a great opportunity to show our heritage and our traditions from the Asian side."

Given its ambitions, it's unsurprising that *Crazy Rich Asians* has been held to high standards. It was criticized before a single scene was shot—specifically for the casting of British-Malaysian actor Henry Golding as Nick and Japanese-British-Argentine actor Sonoya Mizuno as Araminta Lee. But the litigation of whether mixed-race actors are "Asian enough" has overshadowed the number of cast and crew members who are Straits Chinese, such as Lim, Yeoh, associate producer Janice Chua, actor Tan Kheng Hua and Ronny Chieng, who was born in Malaysia, grew up in Singapore and cinched the multinational life of his character Edison Cheng by attending law school in Australia. "We strived very hard to match the perfect accent to every actor, and I think we did a pretty amazing job, but sometimes we had to make concessions," Kwan says. "Like, this actor was amazing, but he's not going to sound like he went to Hong Kong's top boarding school his whole life."

Scene-stealer Awkwafina, who also appeared in Ocean's 8, *helps Wu survive in Singapore*

EVERYONE INVOLVED in this film says they hope it will pave the way for a Hollywood that allows many more stories about Asian Americans, with different perspectives, body types and ethnic backgrounds. And they're counting on that change to happen quickly. For *Crazy Rich Asians,* the pressure to succeed at the box office is high. But there are several factors already working in the film's favor.

Kwan's novels are hugely popular globally, with plenty of non-Asian readers, having sold more than 1 million copies in more than 20 languages. During readings for his first book tour, in 2013, Kwan says it was housewives in Texas and New York City socialites who made up his audience. It happened globally too: "There wasn't a single Asian person," he says, recalling a packed reading in Zurich with 300 people. "It was a sea of white faces that came out. To see that level of interest just speaks to the universality of the story. "

The film is releasing in mid-August, traditionally a time when studios dump action films and mediocre comedies. But *Crazy Rich Asians* is different. Tracking estimates already peg the first-week sales at about $26 million. Warner Bros. screened the film for tastemakers months in advance to help build buzz. That strategy is working: Kwan's first book is on the New York *Times* best-seller list again.

The mood in which the movie opens also matters. Recently, Asian culture has exploded in popularity among Western audiences: K-pop supergroup BTS reached No. 1 on the *Billboard* charts in June, sales of Korean beauty products have tripled since 2015, and Japanese clothing company Uniqlo signed tennis star Roger Federer as its brand representative. *Fresh Off the Boat* has reached syndication status, meaning many more viewers will have the chance to see it.

After years of saying otherwise, Hollywood has finally realized that telling more inclusive stories is just good business. Over the past three years, a number of films—including *Straight Outta Compton* ($202 million), *Creed* ($174 million), *Get Out* ($255 million), *Girls Trip* ($140 million) and especially *Black Panther* ($1.3 billion)—have shown that movie projects in a variety of genres with black and female leads as well as directors of color can be hits. Plus, Chu already has something in common with Nancy Meyers, the queen of romantic comedies: both directors have generated more than $1 billion in ticket sales worldwide.

Still, there will be other definitions of success, beyond the numbers. Chu dreams of this movie being repeatedly played on a television channel like TBS, and he has heard directly from fans about how it has changed the way they see themselves—including men who tell him they're "proud to be an Asian dude" and those who never would've watched a romantic comedy before. "I didn't know we would get that kind of reaction," he says.

Wu hopes for a future with "narrative plentitude" through a wide variety of projects, so that one story doesn't have to represent all Asians, or all Asian Americans—a world in which the ability to tell stories that represent billions of people won't hinge on one film. "When you can be mediocre and still not feel like you have to prove something," she says. "That's when you know you've hit success." ◻

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Time Off

HIDDEN TRUTHS
Glenn Close's new film unpacks the complicated costs and rewards of being the wife of a celebrated man

INSIDE

A TRIO OF SUMMER MEMOIRS EXPLORE WOMEN LIVING ON THEIR OWN

THE HIT YA NOVEL TO ALL THE BOYS I'VE LOVED BEFORE *GETS THE NETFLIX TREATMENT*

THREE YOUNG SKATEBOARDERS FIND THEIR PATH IN A NEW DOCUMENTARY

PHOTOGRAPH BY EMMA HARDY FOR TIME

MOVIES

Glenn Close makes unhappy families look good

By Belinda Luscombe

Jonathan Pryce, who plays Close's famous novelist spouse in The Wife, *says the actor "scared the bejesus out of me in* Fatal Attraction*"*

GRAEME HUNTER PICTURES

"THE WHOLE MALE-FEMALE THING IN THIS country is very volatile right now. I think many women are feeling used by men. They invest a lot in a relationship, in nurturing a man emotionally and in his career, but they have their own careers and emotions and they don't get that nurturing in return." These words are Glenn Close's, and they offer a perfect description of her newest film, *The Wife*. But this quote is actually three decades old; she said it to this magazine in 1987, shortly after she finished *Fatal Attraction*.

If Close were trying to shake the specter of Alex Forrest—the bunny-boiling career woman who tried to destroy her married lover's family in that movie, which remains Close's most iconic role—*The Wife*'s Joan Castleman would be just the ticket. She's everything Forrest was not: long-married, dutiful and supportive, a woman who has spent her life polishing so her spouse could shine. She's neat and nurturing and nice to everyone. She's a wife, after all.

Or is she? Forrest, Close has long said, wasn't the unhinged harpy everyone took her for, but rather a mentally ill woman damaged by childhood sexual trauma. Similarly, in *The Wife,* based on the novel of the same name by Meg Wolitzer, all is not as it seems. From the moment Joe Castleman, Joan's husband, discovers that he has won the Nobel Prize for Literature, the threads that have bound the couple tightly together for decades begin to unravel. Watching Close portray a woman who has given more to her marriage than she perhaps should have is like watching the fog lift from a stranded ski lift. By the end of the movie, audiences can see what's going on clearly, but the view is still a little shocking.

The Wife arrives at time when male-female relations are at a volatile level—yes, again. The #MeToo movement, the Time's Up initiative and the pink wave have all made it clear that lip service isn't enough to redress the unequal balance of power between the sexes. Plenty of women remain in Joan's position, putting their hopes and gifts on simmer in order to fan the flames of a talented man. But Castleman-like men who were once considered too talented to be brought down are increasingly being toppled from their lofty positions in business and the wider culture because of the way they treat women.

"I'd like to think that we're not going to go back to where we were," says Close, sitting in the living room of her cozy but modest Greenwich Village pied-à-terre, with her beloved dog Pip on a cushion near her feet. "I'd like to think that we're at the beginning of a real cultural revolution." Close says she didn't know about Harvey Weinstein's alleged predations—the only thing he did to her was never offer her another part after she turned one down—but the extent of the #MeToo movement didn't come as a surprise to her. "I haven't read all the feminist material," she says. "But no one seemed to be held to account as much as they are held to account now."

Just as the movie never loses sight of the fact that the Castlemans are a great team—albeit a dysfunctional one—Close believes people's misdeeds shouldn't negate their gifts. "If you have a great artist and all of a sudden you find out that he was a predator in some sense, does that negate his art? I will say it does not," she says. "Because then you might as well empty out every museum that exists. We're complicated, conflicted creatures. And that's where things hopefully will settle down."

UNLIKE FORREST or Castleman, Close has been married three times, to a musician, a financier and a biotech entrepreneur. She declines to elaborate on whether any of her unions were like the Castlemans' but says her character reminded her of her mother. Close's father "had a big dollop of narcissism, and my mom, who was a fascinating,

incredibly capable woman, always was subservient to him," she says. "She should have gone to college and been able to follow her curiosities. But my father never nurtured that in her."

The strange childhood Close's parents provided for her informed her life path. Her father was a doctor who left country-club Connecticut so the family could join a cultlike group known as Moral Re-Armament (MRA) when Close was 7. The family moved to a castle in Caux, Switzerland, and was largely separated. "I've always thought that was when my childhood ended," she says. After a decade or so, her parents moved—without their kids—to what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo for 16 years, where her dad eventually became dictator Mobutu Sese Seko's personal physician. "I think he might have been placed by the CIA," she says. "I have yet to really find that out."

When Close arrived at college, she quickly began to question many of the things she had taken for granted at MRA—including her first marriage, which soon dissolved. This distrust of her upbringing influences so much of how she approaches her work. She prepares exhaustively and asks a lot of questions, even about the route she takes across a room. "She needs to know what she's doing in every detail, from where the glass of water should be to the meaning of the whole scene," says *The Wife*'s director, Björn Runge. "You had to really discuss it with her, because it's important for her mind, but also her body, to believe what she's doing."

Life in a cult may have taught her other skills as well. Early in the movie, when the Castlemans get the fateful phone call from Stockholm, Joan gets on the other line to hear the news. As Joe is congratulated, the camera tightens in on Joan's face. Nothing moves. But a dozen unreadable emotions swirl by. Is that pride? Dismay? Jealousy? Shock? Close's ability to "feel as much as possible and show as little as possible," as Runge describes it, is one of her greatest gifts, enabling her to play characters as diverse as an Irish woman posing as a butler in 2011's *Albert Nobbs,* a ruthless litigator in the long-running TV show *Damages* and her second most recognizable role—at least among a certain set—Cruella De Vil in *101 Dalmatians*. As her *Fatal Attraction* co-star Michael Douglas put it back in 1987, "She always looks like she has a secret."

CLOSE'S NEW ROLE has set off Oscar sirens, just as her portrayal of Forrest did. She has been nominated six times and has never won, which means she has smiled into the camera and applauded someone else more than any other actor alive. This year may well be her turn, but being nominated for an Oscar requires campaigning—going to parties and lunches and special screenings—and Close, 71, isn't going to do it. One of the advantages of age, she says, is knowing what makes you happy. "I know that I'm not naturally a spontaneously social person," she says. "I've learned how to seem like one, which is important. But I am more often than not now saying if I'm not going to really enjoy it, I don't think I'll do it." This includes taking selfies with fans, which Close won't do after one fan whose hand she shook started to behave like a stalker.

"My mom is actually quite shy," says Annie Starke, Close's daughter, who plays the young Joan. "But she's an incredible nurturer of those around her." Close's unsettled childhood made her determined to provide something more stable for her daughter, even though she and Annie's father, the film producer John Starke, weren't together. "When Annie turned 7 and she was in the same house that she came home to when she was born, that was a big deal for me, a very big deal," says Close, who spends most of her time in Connecticut. "And the fact that she just got married in that childhood home has huge resonance."

Close declined to visit the set while Starke was shooting, lest she distract her daughter. Starke was unaware that it was her mother who had suggested her for the role. "Björn came to me and said, 'I'm having a hard time casting [young Joan],'" says Close. "I thought about it, and I just said . . ." She puts her hands over her eyes and speaks really fast: "Do you know that my daughter's an actress?" (Starke still had to do several auditions and a screen test.)

> ***'There was one time in my life when I'd wake up at 4 a.m. and all I could think of was the wrong decisions I'd made.'***
>
> GLENN CLOSE

If *The Wife* is an homage to her mother, Close's life is another sort of tribute. "Near the end of her life, my mother said to me, 'I feel I haven't accomplished anything,'" says Close. "To me that's desperately sad." She has no such regrets—not anymore. "There was one time in my life when I'd wake up at 4 a.m. and all I could think of was the wrong decisions and mistakes I'd made," she says. "It was deadly."

Now she has come to terms with her challenges and wrong calls as well as her marriages. "I think humans die without connection, and the deepest connection you have is a connection with a spouse," she says. Still, that doesn't necessarily mean that women have to sacrifice everything for family—even if they can't have a career exactly like hers. "Being a mother is different, I think, from having personal fulfillment," she says. "It's a great balance of life to be able to have both." ◻

BOOKS

Essential reading for women who'd rather go it alone

By Stephanie Zacharek

IN 1936, A WOMAN NAMED MARJORIE HILLIS wrote a book, a best seller in its time and re-published in 2005, called *Live Alone and Like It,* a guide for the woman who, for whatever reason, finds herself going solo. Hillis, a career woman who did end up marrying, wasn't saying that single life was for everyone. "But," she wrote, "the chances are that at some time in your life, possibly only now and then between husbands, you will find yourself settling down to a solitary existence."

The idea of a woman living on her own may have been more of a novelty in 1936 than it is today. Yet even in 2018, a woman who isn't married by a certain age or who has chosen not to have children—or who, perhaps, has been unable to conceive and has decided to channel her energy elsewhere—is still an object of some curiosity. Even today, the assumption isn't necessarily that she made a choice; often, it's that she was somehow left behind.

But the dirty little secret of women who live on their own, whether they're between partners or simply choose not to have one, is that … it's kind of awesome. We all like to think we're in control of our lives. But sometimes the life you're supposed to live chooses you, and it's for the best in ways you can't foresee: children don't arrive as you thought they would, but your career takes a shape you couldn't have imagined. A broken marriage or love affair or the death of a spouse leaves you in despair, even as it opens a space for a self you didn't know you could grow to be. One life can contain so many selves: we never know in advance which ones we'll end up with, so it's best to be prepared for anything. In one way or another, three of this summer's books tackle the idea of living life on your own terms, even when deciding what those terms are seems daunting. The footnote that comes attached to all this self-knowledge is that no one ever said it would be easy.

LONELINESS ALWAYS FEELS BAD, but solitude often feels good, and if there is a little of one in the other, the balance can be its own source of sustenance. That's something Stephanie Rosenbloom captures in her evocative, observant new book, *Alone Time: Four Seasons, Four Cities, and the Pleasures of Solitude,* which was published in June and is really about *being* alone—though that is, after all, much of what living alone means. Rosenbloom, a New York *Times* travel columnist, recounts her experiences as a solo wanderer in Paris, Istanbul, Florence and her hometown of New York City, capturing the joy of making a plan and having the freedom not to stick to it.

She also tackles the great bugaboo of so many people: eating alone in public. In her view, it's an invitation to savor all that's before you, whether that's food or a street view or both. She also notes that for women, eating alone is a fairly recent hard-won right (and is still unacceptable in certain cultures), so they should flex it. Rosenbloom recounts snooty joints that were disappointing and modest ones that brought delight, and she doesn't scoff at McDonald's: "You can learn a thing or two about a city by observing the goings-on there." When she turns up at the one on the Champs-Élysées, she notices the invitation—SAVOUREZ—printed on her Filet-O-Fish container. "And I did."

'I knew I could be alone, but what if I gave myself permission to prefer it? What would that be like?'

GLYNNIS MACNICOL, author of *No One Tells You This*

Because being alone so often involves pushing outside yourself, it's less a way of retreating from the world than an invocation to join it in a more meaningful way. Glynnis MacNicol's thoughtful memoir *No One Tells You This* is an account of her 41st year, one of those soul-shattering epochs we all have, when too much hits at once. By the time MacNicol turned 40, she had launched a solid writing career in New York City and co-founded a networking platform for women, TheLi.st. Just as she might have been figuring out some of her

ILLUSTRATION BY KIM SALT FOR TIME

own personal, approaching-middle-age issues, everyone around her suddenly needed her: her sister, already the mother of two, was about to give birth—and had just split from her husband. Their mother was suffering the devastating effects of Parkinson's disease. MacNicol's network of friends in New York needed her too. She tells a harrowing story of accompanying one friend to the hospital, where the woman gave birth to a stillborn baby. How do you walk a friend through a time when yesterday there was a baby and today there is not? Especially as a 40ish woman trying to decide whether you want to be a mother yourself.

No One Tells You This is the story of how MacNicol made peace with her decision to forge ahead on her own, without children—though "making peace" is a misnomer, because these choices are anything but peaceful. And MacNicol knows that a choice isn't an ending; it's just another door to "What next?" How, she asks, does "one commit to the idea of not committing? Or was this it? A rolling interrogation of myself. Living in a constant state of reinvention."

Along with books like Rebecca Traister's *All the Single Ladies* and Kate Bolick's *Spinster: Making a Life of One's Own,* MacNicol's *No One Tells You This* is part of a trend in recent years of examinations of the possibilities that are now open to women, who have more freedom than ever before. But most of these books have been written by women in their 30s and 40s. What do women 50 and over, who made similar choices years ago, have to say about the experience? I have my own answer: the great and terrible thing about being young is that there are so many possibilities. As you age, the possibilities drain away. That's depressing in some ways, but it's also a relief—there's so much less to want. And the reality is that living alone—like living any life—is often ridiculous. Stupid stuff, sometimes terrible stuff, happens. How you deal with it says a lot about you.

ALONE TIME
Stephanie Rosenbloom
The author, a columnist, makes the case for solitude while exploring four great cities around the world.

NO ONE TELLS YOU THIS
Glynnis MacNicol
A writer living on her own turns 40 and faces big questions, chief among them: Do I want a baby?

YOU'RE ON AN AIRPLANE
Parker Posey
The actor tells her life story and laments a world in which Facebook has replaced face-to-face encounters.

TAKE THE TIME Parker Posey's pants fell down as she was walking on Fifth Avenue. They were harem pants, and Posey—the actor who made her name in '90s indie hits like *Party Girl,* and who now appears as Dr. Smith on Netflix's *Lost in Space*—hadn't tied them on tightly enough. As she recounts in her gloriously woolly memoir *You're on an Airplane,* Posey tried to turn the event into street comedy, hoping to enlist "a stranger to help my shame" and share a laugh. "My pants fell down," she said to a woman passing by, a stylish-looking lady in her 80s. The woman grimaced and walked away, fast.

"When I'm asked, 'What's it like being an actress?' I always say, 'It's like walking around with your pants down and around your ankles,'" Posey writes, though you don't have to be an actor to share that feeling. Posey has a lot to say in *You're on an Airplane*—she jumps from one idea to the next like a hamster exploring a new activity palace. Her style may seem dotty, but it's actually searingly direct. She tackles personal challenges that must have been painful—like having to sell an apartment she couldn't afford, followed by a move into a more cost-efficient rental—but still manages to find some loopy joy in the experience.

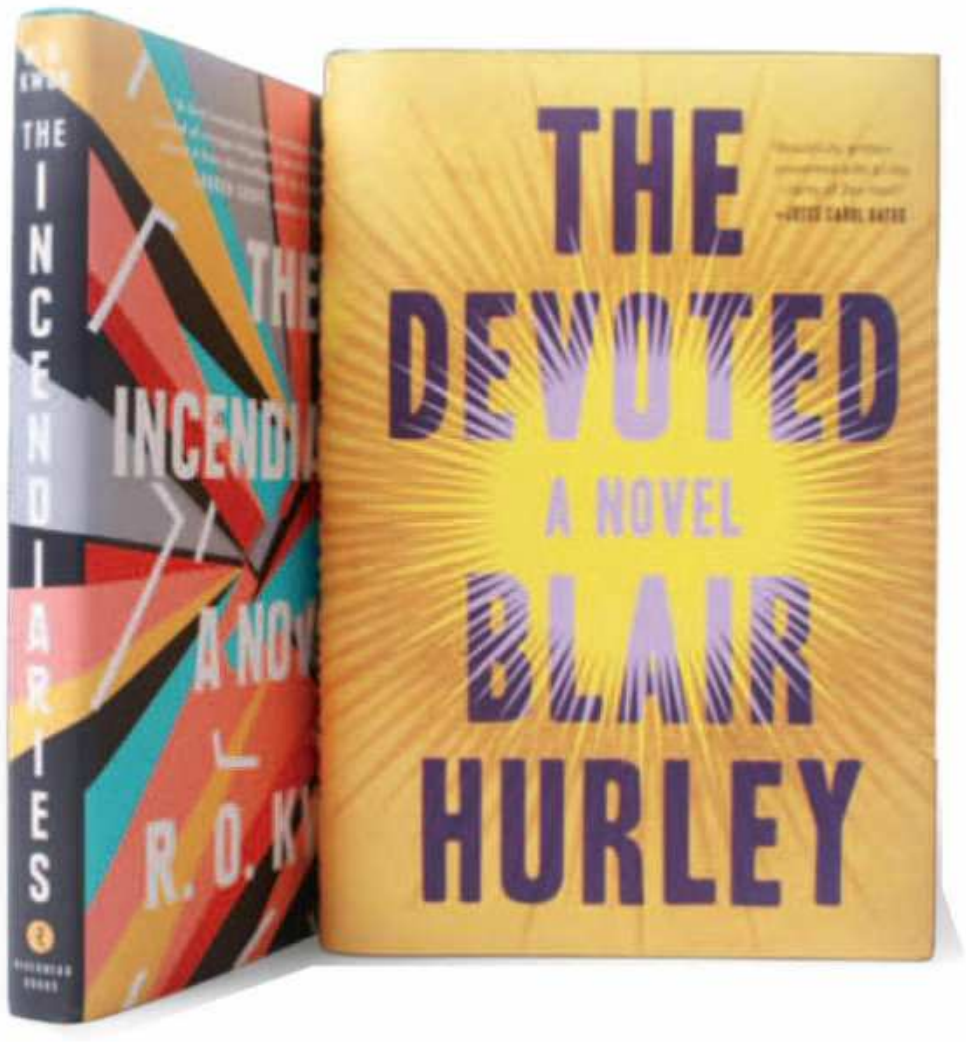
Posey does not have children, but she does have a bichon-frise-poodle-Maltese mix, Gracie, whom she loves dearly. She writes about what it's like to be an actor "of a certain age," when the roles start to dry up if you're a woman. She writes, jauntily, about her insecurities—her candor might even make you feel jaunty about your own.

You're on an Airplane also includes such single-life enhancers as instructions for yoga breathing exercises, a primer on making clay pots (one of Posey's hobbies) and a few special recipes, including her grandmother Nonnie's fireball cocktail, which calls for an actual Atomic Fireball candy. The book ends with a Posey flourish: "Cheers to our lineage and being able to live on the planet at this time, and don't forget that resentment is poison. And good luck with your regrets; they'll leave you lonely and you can't dance with them." In other words, whatever choice you make, there's dancing on the other side, as long as you leave room for it. □

BOOKS

A timely warning against false prophets

By Eliana Dockterman



WRITERS HAVE LONG IMMORTALIZED cult leaders in novels, television and film as irresistible forces who seduce followers into submission. But in reality, they aren't always magnetic. The elusive Bhagwan of the Rajneeshees in Netflix's recent documentary series *Wild Wild Country* hid from the public eye behind his captivating secretary. Keith Raniere lured members into his headline-making group Nxivm by praising their brilliance rather than demonstrating his own. Even in the political arena, we've seen caustic leaders with little charisma build rabid followings.

Two provocative debut novels—R.O. Kwon's *The Incendiaries* and Blair Hurley's *The Devoted,* both out this summer—present utterly charmless prophets who abuse religion in order to cast spells on headstrong young women. Together the stories urge readers to examine their own vulnerabilities.

The Incendiaries' Phoebe holds sway over a cohort of college boys who follow her bouncing ponytail from bar to bar, including an evangelical turned atheist named Will. The two build a relationship on grief: Will has felt afloat since he left his faith, and Phoebe parties to stymie her guilt over a deadly accident.

Enter John Leal, a barefoot Christian cult leader, who exploits Phoebe's pain to lure her to meetings. John proves to be a dubious prophet, and Will recognizes his proselytizing strategies from his own time as a missionary. They battle for Phoebe's soul, both employing abuse as a weapon. John demands ritual whippings, and Will responds to John's lurking presence with his own act of domination. "*If it happens again,*" Phoebe says to Will after a fight. He narrates: "With a kiss, I stalled the threat; I shut Phoebe's mouth with mine."

'To achieve enlightenment, you have to give away everything.'

THE MASTER
from *The Devoted*

The Devoted's Nicole similarly begins as a rebel but eventually finds herself trapped between two controlling men. Disgusted by the church's cover-up of sexual abuse, Nicole scandalizes her Irish Catholic family by converting to Buddhism in high school. After a death she finds comfort in a Buddhist teacher—who eventually demands sex as part of his lessons. Nicole's brother, wary of this instructor, tries to guilt her into returning to the church.

THE ONCE VIVACIOUS women at the center of both novels become marionettes in the hands of men. Their vulnerability can be frustrating. Neither Kwon nor Hurley provides a particularly compelling portrait of the figures who lead them astray. They never entice—they only abuse. The reader is left wondering why two complex female characters would succumb not only to their loved ones, but also to mere sketches of evil.

But that's the point: these figures don't have to be appealing. The promise of enlightenment is seductive enough. Phoebe and Nicole, each suffering in her own way, long for comfort and love, and project their desires onto unworthy men who offer them answers in moments of need.

Both authors capture that longing beautifully. "People with no experience of God tend to think that leaving the faith would be a liberation, a flight from guilt, rules," Will says in *The Incendiaries,* "but what I couldn't forget was the joy I'd known, loving Him." Although Will is convinced that John is dangerous, he sometimes envies Phoebe's position.

In *The Devoted,* Nicole observes, "The [students] seemed to leave soothed … She could almost see how a teacher or student could confuse that with love." Of course, that's exactly what her teacher preys on. He later tells her, "To achieve enlightenment, you have to give away everything … and now I can do what I want with it."

Both novels set themselves apart from others in the genre with a terrifying but insightful warning not to look for easy answers offered by false prophets. That impulse is all the more dangerous in a political era when voters choose to read news that reflects their own myopic views—and vote for politicians who forgo nuance and promise the impossible. ☐

BOOKS: ERIN O'FLYNN FOR TIME; MINDING THE GAP: HULU; TO ALL THE BOYS I'VE LOVED BEFORE: NETFLIX

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What to stream now

Minding the Gap

At first glance, *Minding the Gap* looks like it's a movie about skateboarding. But taking it at face value would undermine one of this year's most thoughtful and emotionally complex films. The documentary, which made a splash at Sundance and is now streaming on Hulu, centers on the stories of three skateboarders from Rockford, Ill.: Zack, a 23-year-old new father; Keire, a talented teenager looking for direction; and the film's director, Bing Liu, who has spent more than a decade filming his friends. For these young men the skate park provides a refuge for their troubles. The gravity-defying tricks and rough thrills they attempt are just a front for deeper issues as these young men move into adulthood, interrogating the ways in which they have been shaped by race, class and toxic masculinity. The film's treatment of its subjects' growing pains is intimate and disarming as they seek to break the cycles of violence. Zack, Keire and Liu may not have concrete answers when it comes to how to change the course of their lives—but they're earnestly asking the right questions. *—C.L.*

AWARD WINNER
Liu's debut documentary won the Jury Award at this year's Sundance Film Festival

Rom-com lover Lara Jean (Lana Condor) wrestles with matters of the heart

MOVIES

A millennial take on boy meets girl

By Cady Lang

ROMANTIC COMEDIES HAVE BEEN forging a comeback, led by a recent boom on Netflix. The latest strong case for the genre's revival is *To All the Boys I've Loved Before,* which embraces its rom-com trappings with a distinctly millennial self-awareness.

Based on Jenny Han's beloved YA novel by the same name, the movie centers on the life of Lara Jean Covey (*X-Men: Apocalypse*'s Lana Condor), a shy high school student who'd rather watch *Sixteen Candles* on a Friday night than try to find her Jake Ryan in real life. Her widowed father (John Corbett) and protective sisters worry that she'll spend the rest of high school with her nose buried in her treasured romance novels as opposed to socializing.

That all changes when the secret love letters she has written to her crushes—who range from the jock she smooched during a game of Spin the Bottle in the seventh grade to the boy next door who also happens to be her big sister's boyfriend—are mysteriously sent to their addresses. As might be expected, chaos ensues. But Lara Jean's embarrassing predicament soon develops into an unlikely love triangle that encourages her to come out of her shell and embrace her vulnerability.

In many ways, the story feels like the teenage rom-coms of years past that Lara Jean loves to watch—but its sensitivity and cultural consciousness improves on its predecessors. In one memorable sequence, Lara Jean (who's biracial, Korean and white) watches *Sixteen Candles* on a date, leading to a thoughtful discussion of the film's now-glaring racism. Other complex issues—like slut-shaming, cyberbullying and the death of a parent—are tackled with nuance. Equally refreshing is the care given in establishing Lara Jean as the heroine of her life. In a genre that frequently resorts to clichés, the movie resists reducing her to an adorkable, lovelorn lead. Much of this is thanks to Condor, who plays Lara Jean with a charming pluckiness that reads as both endearing and empowering.

To All the Boys I've Loved Before is only one of a plethora of youthful rom-coms to hit Netflix this summer in the streaming giant's bid to bring back the form. But its heartwarming and clear-eyed approach to first love and the challenges of coming-of-age distinguishes it from its contemporaries. Add it to your queue. □

Miranda Lambert The outspoken country star on the importance of women's voices, advice from Dolly Parton and why she still carries a handgun

Back in 2003, you were a runner-up on *Nashville Star*, a televised country-music competition. You've since become one of country's biggest acts. What set you apart from the beginning? I have always been pretty honest, in my music and with my fans, about who I am: being flawed, a regular girl with regular problems. I've made a career based on telling the truth.

How has country music changed since you started? For the past couple of years it's been skewed one way: a lack of women and songs with content from women's perspectives. When Carrie [Underwood] and I first came on the scene, there was this whole generation of women before us. Over the past three or four years, it has been very male-driven. But I feel like it's starting to shift and people are starting to pay attention to women again, which is great, because I think it should be a good balance.

What is the "women's perspective" that you think is missing? Women want to hear women, because we want to know we're not alone in all of our issues, you know? I mean, I do. I want to feel like someone's telling my story.

You're part of a country trio too. What do the Pistol Annies do that you can't do alone? Something about being together makes us a force to be reckoned with. We can get more raw and rugged than we would alone. We're set for a fall release for a record. I think it's the best writing we've ever done. We've lived a lot of life since our last record. I think it's three girls telling our story very bravely.

What advice have you gotten from other country stars? When I met Dolly [Parton], the overall message was, "Keep going. You do you. Believe in what you believe in and don't take no." That's how I've always lived, but it was so nice to have someone like her reassure me of that.

"WOMEN WANT TO HEAR WOMEN, BECAUSE WE WANT TO KNOW WE'RE NOT ALONE"

When you're on tour—as you are now—do you have a preshow ritual? I have an Airstream on the road with us. Her name is Wanda. It's a rolling bar that's been out with us for eight years. We meet up at Wanda about an hour before the show with the band, do a toast and walk onstage. It's pretty simple!

You're a lifetime member of the NRA and have had a handgun license since your early 20s. What's your relationship with guns now? My dad was a police officer, so early on I was taught gun safety, what guns were for, how to use them and when not to touch them. I've just grown up around them, so it's my normal. I'm a girl, I travel a lot by myself, and I like to carry to protect myself. I know everybody has an opinion on it and it's polarizing, but for me it's just a way of life.

Nearly 10 years ago you founded an animal-rescue charity. Why are dogs so special to you? It's where my heart is. It started with volunteering at the Humane Society in Texas; I adopted a little dog who was my companion. Her name is Delilah. For the first seven years of my career, she went everywhere with me; she was therapy. When I lived in Oklahoma, it was a very rural area and I fostered about 38 dogs myself. Now I have eight. I think that's pretty good.

You've sung about everything from heartbreak to domestic abuse. What else is on your mind? My focus is starting to head toward more storytelling. I spent the last 11 or 12 years writing about my life, and that's gotten me here. But some of my favorite singer-songwriters write from character perspectives. It's really hard for me, so I'm going to work on that. —RAISA BRUNER

ANDREW H. WALKER—SHUTTERSTOCK

✓Yes

✓Yes

✓Yes

✓Yes

✓Yes

xNo

✓Yes

✓Yes

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